Deoband aur Bareli ke Ikhtilaf wa Niza‘ pur:

Fayslah Kun Munazarah

The Decisive Debate:
On the Deobandi and Barelwi Conflict

A thorough refutation of false allegations made against the scholars of Deoband in Husam al-Haramayn

Mawlana Muhammad Manzur Nu‘mani
(1905-1997)

Note from the Translator

Fayslah Kun Munazarah, first printed in 1933 CE, is a thorough rebuttal of the verdicts of disbelief against four senior scholars of the Deobandi School as presented in *Husam al-Haramayn* of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Barelwi. Sufficient details about the book are given in the author's introduction below. Due to the paucity of material on the subject in the English language, many Muslims in the English-speaking world were easily swayed towards the view propounded in *Husam al-Haramayn* due to the vigour with which the fatwa is propagated by its English-speaking proponents and the gravity of the allegations made. The book translated here provides a balanced, level-headed, point-by-point critique of the fatwa in simple and easy-to-understand language, demonstrating with complete clarity the deception of the original accusations against the Deobandi elders and their innocence from the heresies ascribed to them. Sincere readers who have been exposed to the allegations will now have the opportunity to assess the validity of such claims. Allah, Most Exalted, commands in the Glorious Qur'an: "O you who believe, if a sinful person brings you a report, verify its correctness, lest you should harm a people out of ignorance, and then become remorseful on what you did." (49:6)

Born in 1323 H/1905 CE, the author of the book, Mawlana Muhammad Manzur Ahmad Nu'mani (Allah have mercy on him), graduated from India's leading Islamic seminary, Dar al-'Ulum Deoband, in the year 1346 H/1927 CE. At the madrasah, he studied under such luminaries as Imam al-'Asr 'Allamah Anwar Shah al-Kashmiri and other major scholars of hadith and fiqh from the Indian subcontinent. Upon graduating, he returned to his hometown of Sunbhul and began serving the Muslim community there. In the period following his studies, he was also actively engaged in debates against various groups, particularly the Barelwi group which had instigated a tragic *fitnah* of *takfir* that had spread throughout India. With meticulous research and lucid speech, he composed many comprehensive works related to these groups, the work translated here being one of them. Within a few years of graduating from Deoband, he also established a monthly journal, *al-Furqan*, which gained wide popularity. His pledge in the spiritual path was to Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir Raipuri (1295 – 1382 H). He passed away in the year 1417 H/1997 CE. He authored a number of works on hadith, tasawwuf, politics and other topics, and he left behind a lasting legacy in the field of *da'wah* and *tabligh*.

Zameelur Rahman
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In this world, some events are so inexplicable, strange and beyond reason that, even if the intellect racks its head a thousand times, it will still be unable to offer a comprehensible explanation for it. The general treatment of the revered prophets (upon them peace) and their call to religion by their peoples is from amongst such events of this world that are inexplicable, strange and beyond reason. The Originator of the world, its Administrator, Creator and Lord, Himself, expressed "anguish" over this in such mystifying terms: "Ah, the anguish for the bondsmen! Never came there unto them a messenger but they did mock him!" (Qur'an 36:30)

By way of example, the biography of the Seal of the Prophets, our master, Hazrat Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace), as presented in the hadith and Siyar literature, can be viewed from this angle:

He was born in the glorious [city of] Makkah, and that is where he grew up. From childhood, in form, he was attractive and adorable, and in habits, he was impeccable. This is why everyone loved and respected him, as though he was the beloved of the entire nation and the light of their eyes. Then, when his blessed age was forty, Allah Almighty granted, along with this adorable form and impeccable conduct, the perfection of prophethood and the magnificence and beauty of messengership, after which his conduct became even greater. The spectacle of knowledge and wisdom began to spring forth from his tongue, and along with the beautiful and handsome face given to him at birth, now the light of prophethood shone forth too. Then Allah Almighty commanded him to call people to Tawhid and Islam. With full sincerity, complete love and utmost wisdom, full of pain and burning, with such a voice that even a stone cannot remain impervious, he presented the call of Tawhid and Islam before his people, the truthfulness, rationality and mercifulness of which was as if completely intuitive. The verdict of the intellect and the requirement of reason was that the people, who were previously his ardent admirers and believed and said of him that he is truthful and trustworthy, would with one voice say to this religious invitation "we accept," and like moths, would fall on him, and there would be no denier or opponent visible in Makkah. But what in fact happened was that besides a few numerically insignificant loyal followers, his entire people, who would always refer to him as truthful and trustworthy and handed to him the flower of respect, were in agreement on rejecting and opposing him. They began to call him a mad poet and lying magician and they made it their most beloved pastime to stoke hatred and enmity against him. Thereafter, for approximately ten years, those who knew and recognised him committed such injustice against him and such despicable crimes that he himself stated: "No one has been persecuted in [the path of] Allah as much as I have been persecuted."

The thinking mind is perplexed: How could this have happened?! No one can say that in those days in Makkah a particular wind blew which corrupted men's minds, making them mad, due to which the entire nation became insane and it was this insanity that drove them to do what they did with him.

Take a second example from this ummah:

The four pious predecessors, Hazrat Abu Bakr al-Siddiq, Hazrat ‘Umar al-Faruq, Hazrat ‘Uthman al-Ghani and Hazrat ‘Ali al-Murtada (Allah be pleased with them all), were great companions of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Those who possess any knowledge of the history of Islam and the Messenger of Islam (upon him blessings and peace) know that along with Allah and His Messenger, and along with their holy religion, the trustworthiness and sincerity of these pious predecessors were beyond all question and doubt. The many sacrifices of these truthful slaves of Allah and these loyal devotees of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) for Islam, and the many services they rendered for the holy religion of Allah in the time of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and after him, are brighter than the sun and more established and more reliable than the most well-attested and established events in [the history of] the world. Furthermore, because of the recurrence of the reports (*tawatur*) of the many instances in which the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) recognised the services and sacrifices of these four devotees with love and estimation and repeatedly gave testimony and glad tidings of their acceptance and their companionship with him in paradise, it is very close to being as decisive and incontrovertible as the fact that the belief in Tawhid and the belief in the Resurrection and fasting, Hajj, and Zakah are undoubtedly and definitively from the teachings of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace).

But ponder over the history of this ummah, at the bewildering and staggering and incomprehensible event that occurred right from the inception of Islam, when groups originated from amongst the Muslims themselves whose distinction was to deny the faith of these exceptional and distinguished companions of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and to call them (Allah forbid!) disbelievers, hypocrites and deserving of execution. And till today, these sects are present in the world. Who does not know that the distinction of the ancient sect of the Muslims, the Shi‘ah, is to oppose and criticise Hazrat Abu Bakr (Allah be pleased with him), Hazrat ‘Umar (Allah be pleased with him) and Hazrat ‘Uthman (Allah be pleased with him) and to deny that they were sincere believers, which may as well be the foundation and symbol of their religion? And in this matter, their extremism and madness reached such a level that many of the educated elite from them in this era of “education” and “tolerance” are not ashamed of publicising their condition that even if another person praises and venerates those pious personalities they find it intolerable, and on the other hand, disowning and disassociating themselves from these pure souls is their most favourite pastime and is an act of reward according to them.

Reason bows its head: what can be said of this?!

Leave irrational argumentation and crookedness and with a cool heart, ponder: Can any mind give a comprehensible explanation for this manner of treating these people?

Who can say that all members of this sect were mad and devoid of intellect? The reality is that there are very educated men amongst them and learned scholars, and at least one or two intelligent and perceptive ones existed in every age and are present even today. Rather, those distinguished scholars and writers of this sect who wrote large books specifically on this topic – of attacking the three caliphs – those books themselves are a testament to their sanity, knowledge and awareness. Rather, this is an instructive illustration of [the verse] “Allah has let him go astray, despite having knowledge.” (45:23)

The same is the condition of their original nemeses and adversaries, the Khawarij and Nawasib. According to these wretched groups, our master, Hazrat 'Ali (Allah ennoble his face) was (Allah forbid!) so irreligious, and such a great enemy of Islam and a criminal worthy of execution, that his murder was not only deserving of reward, but his killer would attain certainty of paradise by means of it. Historians have written that when the wretched Ibn Muljim stabbed our master, Hazrat 'Ali (Allah be pleased with him), with his sword, and he realised the thrust was complete and he was successful in his mission of ending the life of the revered master, despite being arrested, he said: "I have attained success, by the Lord of the Ka'bah!" The intent of this wretched one was that in spilling the blood of our master 'Ali and extinguishing the candle of his life, this was a sufficient purchase for his salvation and paradise, and whatever happens to him in this life, this act will certainly deliver him to paradise in the eternal life after death. Tell me! What can the thinking mind offer in explanation for this deviance and puzzled mind? By means of history, those people who are aware of Ibn Muljim and his sect, know that even this sect was not full of madmen and ignorant people, rather there were many distinguished, knowledgeable and perceptive people amongst them.

The truth of the matter is that in any matter, whenever any person, under the influence of the love of wealth or the love of fame or any other misguided desire, instead of the guidance of Allah, chooses his decisions based on his desires and passions, then generally the direction and sound understanding given by Allah [to every human being] will be taken away, and then, despite outwardly maintaining a rational mind and the faculty of his senses, such actions issue from him in this matter that a sound intellect cannot give any [rational] explanation for. The Qur'an describes such people as: "They have hearts wherewith they do not understand, eyes wherewith they do not see, and ears wherewith they do not hear. They are like cattle. Rather, they are much more astray. " (7:179)

Intellect-defying deviance like this can be found in abundance in the later periods of Islam also. And such people, who made it their chosen pastime to oppose, criticise and offend the best and most pious people of their time continued to appear in different eras. Rather, the rare and uncommon lives from the pious scholars and imams of this ummah are probably those who had received no share in this prophetic inheritance. With grief and rage, Taj al-Din al-Subki wrote in *Tabaqat al-Shafi'iyyah al-Kubra*: "There is no imam except attackers attacked him and wasters were wasted in him." In this age, the sorrow and pain caused by retelling something about this phenomenon is also one link in this chain.

The full knowledge of the realities is with Allah Almighty. But to the point that human knowledge and comprehension has a grasp, your heart can say with full contentment and without fear of rejection, that after Hazrat Shah Wali Allah (Allah have mercy on him) and Hazrat Shah 'Abd al-'Aziz (Allah have mercy on him) in the thirteenth century Hijri and nineteenth century CE, the sacrifices of their successors and inheritors, Hazrat Shah Isma'il Shahid (Allah have mercy on him) and Hazrat Sayyid Ahmad Shahid (Allah have mercy on him) and their associates to protect the religion of Islam and those efforts they made in order to preserve it – to the degree that in the Battle of Balakot they sacrificed their lives in this path – and then the effect that those efforts and sacrifices has had on the Muslims here [in India], and because of which a religious revival has become manifest in this country, and the qualities of piety, consciousness [of Allah] and connection to Allah and the spirit of jihad and adherence to the Sunnah that

took on a new life in this country, and in these qualities the state that those great personalities themselves possessed; if all these things are kept in view, no doubt will remain that these revered personalities were at that time from the elite accepted bondsmen of Allah Almighty.

Then in the next period – meaning, the end of the thirteenth century and start of the forteenth century – the success that Allah gave the intellectual and spiritual inheritors of these warriors for the religion and reformers of the nation, Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him) and Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him) and their close companions, to preserve and serve His holy religion in this country, and to spread Tawhid, Sunnah and general Islamic teachings in this country by their earnestness and efforts, and in terms of knowledge, action, love and complete annihilation (*fanaiyyat ki jami'iyyat*), the state of those great personalities themselves, and the great prospering of the scale of these blessed qualities in all different classes of Muslims by means of them, and the fruits and effects of these things; after seeing them with the eyes, there will be no room for doubt in the heart that these revered personalities in this age were from the elite slaves of the Lord who Allah Almighty chose by means of the special connection of their hearts to Him to serve His religion and spread Tawhid and Sunnah. However, the inheritance of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and his righteous caliphs persisted in these slaves of the Lord. Thus, in this time, such people emerged who made it their life's work to create a bad name for these revered personalities and, by levelling false accusations at them, turn the Muslims against them.

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the person who had the greatest share and who can be described by [the Qur'anic phrase] "the one who took on himself the lead among them" (24:11) in drawing up fatwas, stirring tribulations and concocting slanders against these fighters in Allah's path, the protectors of the Sunnah and Shari'ah and reformers of the nation, was Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib of Bareli, who had achieved such a rank in *takfir*-mongering that as an example of those who unceasingly declare believers as disbelievers, generally his name comes to the tongue for striking a similitude.

In his early period, Khan Sahib made Hazrat Shah Isma'il Shahid (Allah have mercy on him) his target for attacks and *takfir*, and in his fatwas and treatises he attributed such filthy and revolting beliefs to him which a believing soul tremors to even quote. For many years, it remained his preoccupation to work against this great personality. In each treatise and fatwa, in attempting to prove dozens upon dozens of ways in which this martyr on the path of the Lord was a disbeliever, he demonstrated his eagerness for *takfir*.

After this, to exercise his vindictiveness, he selected the intellectual and spiritual inheritors of this Wali Allah family, Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him) and Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him) and others from the elders of the group of Deoband. Then by filling his life with attacks and *takfir* of these senior scholars, he continued to offer this as commodity for adding to his "good rewards" and "elevating" his rank. Before all else, in 1320 H, in his book *al-Mu'tamad al-Mustanad*, by charging these revered personalities with the crimes of the denial of the finality of prophethood, ascribing lies to the Lord of Glory and diminishing and debasing the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace), he declared them definitive disbelievers. But since his fatwa and *takfir*-mongering was so

notorious and infamous, it had no effect, such that even those great scholars he issued *takfir* upon took no notice.

Seeing this reaction to his fatwa, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib hatched a new plan:

In 1323 H, he composed a fatwa declaring those great scholars disbelievers, in which, by attributing such clear disbeliefs as those mentioned, of denying the finality of prophethood, ascribing lies to the Lord of Glory and defaming the revered Messenger, he charged them with definitive disbelief, such that if anybody believes them to be Muslims or even doubts that they are disbelievers, he is also definitely a disbeliever and outside the fold of Islam and from the inhabitants of Hell. Taking this purely fabricated and slanderous document of *takfir*, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib in that very year went to Hijaz, and when he met the revered scholars and muftis of the glorious [city of] Makkah and the pure [city of] Madinah, with total deviousness and scheming, he told those revered scholars [as paraphrased from the introduction to his *Husam al-Haramayn*] that:

> In Hindustan, a very difficult time has reigned on the Muslims. There are people arising amongst the Muslims with such-and-such heretical beliefs, and they have influenced the Muslim masses. We "strangers" are engaged in an attempt to end this *fitnah* but in this important task we are in need of your support by gaining your endorsements for the fatwa of *takfir* against those heretics – because you are inhabitants of the holy land of Allah and the pure city of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and because in religious leadership we Muslims in Hindustan have full reliance on you. Thus by means of your endorsements of this fatwa, the general Muslims of India can be saved from this disbelief and heresy. Otherwise, the *fitnah* is so immense that there is fear that their faith will be lost. So, help, help, O steeds of Allah! Aid, aid, O knights of the army of the Messenger of Allah![1]

In sum, before those scholars of the two Harams – who were completely unaware of the original incidents and because of having no knowledge of the Urdu language were unable to read those books of the seniors from the group of Deoband to which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib attributed denial of the finality of prophethood and other heretical beliefs – Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib presented this fabricated fatwa in this fashion and with an introduction from which it appears that the faith of the Muslims of Hindustan depends on this fatwa and the signatures of approval from those scholars of the two Harams, and if this does not happen it is as though they will all turn apostate – we seek protection in Allah, and there is no power and no might except with Allah.

Many pure-hearted scholars of the glorious [city of] Makkah and the pure [city of] Madinah believed all these statements of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib to be true, and after this, just as he had hoped, with full religious zeal, they wrote endorsements on those fatwas of disbelief. However, some people of insight, because of the insight of faith

[1] The fatwa which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib presented before the scholars of the two Harams, he later printed and published under the name *Husam al-Haramayn*. This paragraph is the upshot and summary of its introduction. From simple shedding of tears and small sighs, there is a cunning art to influencing the pious and simple slaves of Allah, and the introduction to Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's *Husam al-Haramayn* is a unique example of this. I only wrote the upshot and summary of his words. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

and some secondary indications, they were in doubt and were cautious in this matter, and were thus saved from being entangled in this situation.[2]

In short, this fabricated fatwa, which was based purely on incorrect explanations and slanderous accusations, was published in Hindustan under the name of *Husam al-Haramayn*, and it created an uproar, that with respect to those famous and noble scholars and great elders of the group of Deoband - Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him), Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him), Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib Saharanpuri (Allah have mercy on him) and Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him) – even the scholars and muftis of the honoured [city of] Makkah and the pure [city of] Madinah gave fatwa that (Allah forbid!) they are such decisive disbelievers and apostates that whoever doubts that they are disbelievers and inhabitants of Hell, he too is a disbeliever and from the inhabitants of Hell.

There is no doubt that by this antic of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib he created a storm of *fitnah* for the Muslims of Hindustan. And probably thousands or millions of simple-hearted slaves who were completely unaffected by the fatwa-mongering of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, because of the names of the scholars of the two Harams, they became afflicted by this *fitnah*. When our elders – whose entire focus at that time was concentrated on the primary engagements of preserving Islam in Hindustan, that is, lecturing, teaching, reforming and guiding etc. and who never turned their attention towards the *takfiri* intents of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, rather, becoming entangled with such people and answering their slanders was against their principles and tempraments – saw that Allah's slaves were being deceived by the names of the scholars of the two Harams, and because of this deception those poor souls were afflicted by *fitnah*, even these respected individuals believed it a necessity to remove the veil to uncover the true reality of this deception. Thus, from the four great personalities to whom heretical beliefs were ascribed and were thus ruled to be disbelievers, the two scholars whose light at the time still shone on this earth, Hakim al-Ummah Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Sahib Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him) and Makhdum al-Millah Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib Saharanpuri (Allah have mercy on him), in that period gave their explanations, in which they revealed their innocence from those heretical beliefs and they clearly wrote that those beliefs which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib ascribed to them in *Husam al-Haramayn* are pure slanders against them, and those who have these beliefs are disbelievers even according to them. The explanations of these scholars were published at that time in such treatises as *al-Sahab al-Midrar*, *Qat' al-Watin* and others. Rather, the explanation of Hazrat Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him) was published in the form of a brief and independent treatise called *Bast al-Banan*.

At that time, it also happened that after Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib returned from Hijaz, a talking-point was generated in the two noble Harams, particularly the pure [city of] Madinah, that the beliefs of those people from Hindustan concerning whom Mawlawi [Ahmad Rida Khan] took endorsements [from the scholars of Hijaz] of their disbelief were explained inaccurately. Hearing this, some noble scholars from them felt it was necessary to correspond with the scholars of Deoband to verify the matter. Thus, whatever Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote in *Husam al-Haramayn* in relation to

[2] For full details, see the treatise *al-Shihab al-Thaqib* [by Shaykh al-Islam Mawlana Husayn Ahmad Madani] (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

those revered personalities and whatever he said to them [directly] to create hatred and animosity against them in the hearts of the scholars of the two Harams, having all of this in view, they composed 26 questions for those revered personalities, and requested answers from the scholars of Deoband to them. All the questions were related to the beliefs, methodology and track of the scholars of Deoband. Thereupon, Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib Saharanpuri (Allah have mercy on him) wrote a detailed and evidenced reply, on which almost all the senior and famous scholars of the group of Deoband wrote endorsements, and these answers were sent to the scholars and muftis of the two noble Harams and besides it, Egypt, Levant and other Islamic countries, who all wrote endorsements and wrote in support of it, and they stated that these are the beliefs of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, and there is no statement in them against the beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah.

All these questions and answers and the endorsements of the noble scholars of Hindustan, the two noble Harams and other Islamic countries, have been published with its Urdu translation in the form of a large treatise called *al-Tasdiqat li Daf' al-Talbisat*. Then, till today, this treatise has been reprinted several times. The reality is that for devout seekers of truth, only this treatise was sufficient, and even now it is still sufficient.

Besides this, from the students and servants of those senior personalities, Hazrat Mawlana Sayyid Husayn Ahmad Sahib Madani and Hazrat Mawlana Sayyid Murtaza Hasan Sahib Chandpuri – who at that time were from the young scholars and learned graduates from the group of Deoband – wrote, in response to the fabricated fatwa of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, *al-Sahab al-Midrar*, *al-Shihab al-Thaqib*, *Tazkiyat al-Khawatir*, *Tawdih al-Bayan* and other independent treatises, in which, with complete detail and clarity, they showed the various incorrect explanations and [they showed] all the distortions and deceptions of Khan Sahib of Bareli regarding the passages of Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him), Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him), Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib Saharanpuri (Allah have mercy on him)and Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him). These treatises gave further clarity to this matter, and it was as though the matter was closed. However, on behalf of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, the task of *takfir* and causing division continued in the same fashion. But after those answers, no life remained in it, and its market lost value.

Then in 1345-6 H (1926-7 CE), meaning about 20 years after the first publication of *Husam al-Haramayn*, the successors of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Shaib again, with clamour and ruckus, raised this *fitnah*. Then through the means of fatwa-mongering, open challenges and advertisements to attempt to cause a growth in their market, I say with sadness and grief, the poor Muslim masses were again exposed to it, and due to their ignorance of religion and fickleness, they again became the targets of *fitnah*. And such ignorant people who do not even know the pronouncement of faith (*la ilaha illallah*), having been affected by those *fitnah*-instigators, began to call those great scholars of religion disbelievers, believing it to be rewarding. Houses became battlegrounds, and even the mosques and 'Id mats were made places of war.

In that year (1345-6 H), the helpless writer of these lines, was completing his final year (*dawrah hadith*) in Dar al-'Ulum Deoband. And it was either good fortune or bad fortune that in my hometown and its neighbouring areas the flares of this *fitnah* were very intense. It was the consequences of the circumstances – and the eagerness of youth

certainly played a role – that I [turned my efforts toward] extinguishing this flame, and by opposing and fighting those who kindled it till the very end, I decisively settle the matter. Then for around ten years, along with other works of lecturing, writing etc., I was also keenly engaged in this occupation. Here, without any humility or humbleness it is best for me to mention that I spared no effort in attending all the places where the need was realised and I debated the flag bearers of *takfir*, and in replying to their claims, I wrote small and large treatises which number around 40 to 50; rather, 21 years ago from now, in 1353 H, when *al-Furqan* was running [its monthly instalments], its specific subject matter at that time was opposition to this *fitnah*.

But it was 3 to 4 years after the commencement of *al-Furqan*, in 1354 H/1937 CE, that it came to my attention that there was a big change happening in Hindustan and it demanded that I put all my efforts towards serving Islam and Muslims by creating Islamic sentiments and steadfastness in adherence to Islam in those groups of Muslims in whom Islamic sentiments were deficient and their attachment to Islam was weak. This feeling overcame my heart and mind to such an extent that in a few days the appeal of all other works ended. Thus, leaving all works, I made this project my sole work, to such a degree that in refutation of the *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli some very important books had been written but their time for printing had not yet come, and even the concern for preserving their manuscripts did not remain. Rather, there were two such books from them, the major parts of which had been written, and they only awaited some finishing touches and handing the copies over to the printing press – even those I did not continue writing and no concern was given to the preservation of those copies that were written, as a consequence of which all the copies and all the manuscripts were lost. At the time I had no regret about this, but now I am regretful and my feeling today is [as in the hadith]: "Had I known before about my matter what I know now, I would not have done what I did."

The impending revolution in India which this helpless one sensed in 1937 CE – concern for the consequences of which led me to turn my heart and mind towards this direction – came exactly ten years after this in 1947 with such circumstances and such trials which the greatest futurists could not have predicted. Pain is felt in even the memory of those things which afflicted the Muslims in this revolution of Hindustan. But it was hoped that from this evil good will emerge, that is, some sense will return to the general Muslims of Hindustan, and those who could make improvements for them in terms of religion and material [success] will be engaged in strong constructive works, while any deluded person will not be able to continue his misguided works, and this *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli like any *fitnah* will now begin to subside. But how wrong was what we thought!

It was realised that even from this frightful and reminiscent-of-the-Resurrection revolution many Muslims did not take heed, and no improvement came about in them regarding their gain or loss, advantage or disadvantage. In those situations where some semblance of tranquillity was created, all the destructive works and those idiocies and stupidities again restarted, till such a time, around two or three years later when the circumstances of Hindustan became somewhat milder, in many areas, the efforts of the flag bearers of this *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli and their keenness to cause division and create corruption again reignited.

For around two to two and half years, the situation was such that the rare days were when letters from various parts of the country did not come to me regarding this *fitnah* and corruption. In these letters, it was generally written that:

> From the Barelwi group, so-and-so famous *mukaffir* Mawlawi Sahib has come here and his speeches have created a storm. As a consequence, a battleground and warzone has been created amongst the Muslims. By taking the names of so-and-so and so-and-so senior scholars and revered personalities of the religion from Hindustan and attributing to them such-and-such filthy beliefs, the practice of *takfir* has been spread amongst the laypeople. And by peddling lies and slanders against the groups in Hindustan doing work in the religious sphere, particularly Jam'iyat al-'Ulama and Tablighi Jama'at, they have created hatred in the general Muslims against them, and their ignorant listeners raise their hands to pledge opposition to those groups. The result of this is that great obstacles have been placed in the path of the work we are doing to bring about adherence to religion amongst the Muslims masses, as those we wish to serve believe that it is an act of reward to show hostility and opposition to us.

For around two to two and half years, such letters continued to come to me from different parts of the country, and nearly in every letter there was a demand that, in order to save Muslims from this evil *fitnah* and in order to answer the slanders of those fabricators, to reply immediately and send such-and-such and such-and-such books of mine in this respect.

The condition of my books that were written on this topic was that shortly after [their authorship], they became unavailable. And the condition of my heart was that Allah Almighty had filled it with the certainty that after the concern of inspecting and rectifying my *nafs*, my time and efforts are best and most valuably spent – especially in this time when there is a secret plot, nay open efforts, to eradicate the belief of the Muslims masses – in the primary and foundational works to create religious sentiment, a spirit of faith and an Islamic life in the general masses of the Muhammadan ummah – which is the great jihad of this time.

Besides, in my earlier phase, after ten years of experience, it became a "true certainty" (Qur'an 69:51) for me that the educated flag bearers and leaders of this *fitnah* of *takfir* never misunderstood or made an academic slip. They themselves know very well that our elders are completely free of those heretical beliefs they attribute to them. In short, I do not have even an atom's weight of doubt in this ungodliness, that purely for their worldly benefits and interest, they wilfully slandered and falsely accused our elders. Therefore, there is no hope that if they understand the matter through the means of writing or lecturing, this *fitnah* will end. Not only once or twice, again and again, through the means of writing and lecturing and discussion, attempts have been made to make them understand. Books have been written. Debates have been had. And by the grace and mercy of Allah Almighty and His accordance and support, in those books and those debates, the matter was composed and written in such a way that if in reality there was some misunderstanding or academic error then this matter would have ended long ago. But the reality is that, since this *fitnah*-mongering is the means of their work and livelihood, even if they are made to understand a thousand times, they will never accept. This condition of theirs is exactly like the stubborn actions of those who oppose Allah, regarding whom the Noble Qur'an says: "And they denied them, though their souls acknowledged them, for spite and arrogance." (27:14)

This is why I am certain that talking with these instigators to make them understand is merely a waste of time and actually helps their cause. This is why it is my sure opinion that all of this should be avoided, and the policy mentioned in these words of the Qur'an

should be adopted clearly: "There is no argumentation between us and you. Allah will bring us together, and to Him is the final return." (42:15)

Thus, I will no longer correspond with the flag bearers and leaders of this *fitnah* of *takfir* who have made this *fitnah*-mongering their occupation and work. However, it is no doubt the right of those poor Muslim laymen who, being deceived by their scholarly form and scholarly dress, became afflicted by this *fitnah* of *takfir*, that in a suitable manner they are made to understand and an attempt is made to save them from this *fitnah*.

In this respect a grassroots and general method is that in the place where this *fitnah* is manifest, to explain to the educated Muslims amongst them the actual truth and the reality of these *fitnah*-stirrers, and then they will make attempts to make the masses understand.

Furthermore, it is necessary to hold gatherings specifically for this purpose and respected scholars who are aware of the reality of this *fitnah* and the *fitnah*-stirrers should deliver lectures in them.

Furthermore, it is also required that in this respect one or two books are printed in which a sufficient and adequate rebuttal is given to the slanders of those impious fabricators against the elder and senior scholars of the religion, with complete verification and detail, politely and with simple language, upon reading which every literate seeker of truth will know the truth and can make others understand it. All praise to Allah, for this objective, there is absolutely no need to write or prepare a new book. As was mentioned above, the work that was done in the first period is sufficient and adequate for all times. The need is only that in this regard arrangements are made to reprint those important and beneficial books which were lost by the passage of time.

Although such work is now very burdensome to my temperament, but for two to two and a half years those letters that have continued coming and those communications that have come to me from different parts of the country regarding this fitnah have forced this helpless one to at least commit to preparing the final answer this helpless one wrote with the name *Ma'rikat al-Qalam* 21 years ago[3] in response to *Husam al-Haramayn* of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, the subtitle or second title of which was *Fayslah Kun Munazarah* – which has been unavailable for around 20 years such that no copy was kept with me – for printing, by procuring a copy of it and taking a quick look over it and changing a few words.

Besides this, around 19 or 20 years ago from today, I wrote several articles in response to the *fitnah* of those who charge Hazrat Shah Isma'il Shahid (Allah have mercy on him) with disbelief by accusing him of revolting and impure slanders. Each article was like an independent treatise. All these articles were also lost. Now when the need was felt [to reprint them] and attempts were made, with the help of Allah Almighty, all these articles have been received and having revised them, I have prepared them [for printing] by arranging them in the form of a separate book.

The slanders which the general *mukaffirin* of the Barelwi group repeat more frequently regarding our elders, and on which they base their *takfir*, with the grace of the Almighty, I hope these two treatises are enough for answering them. Their preparation has been delegated to a dear friend. The dear friend has intentions to see them printed. If he

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3 That is, in the year 1352 H/1933 CE.

manages to do so, then it is hoped that if Allah wills, within two or three months, both treatises will be ready.

Loved ones from different parts of the country who are worried by the disturbance of this *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli wrote letters to this helpless one and insisted that I again turn my attention to this direction. I ask them that in my present circumstances and activities, this helpless one feels that to save the general Muslims from the evil of this *fitnah* in this time, it is only binding on him to present to them these pages regarding his opinion, advice and experience, and to prepare those two books which he believes are necessary to publish, and for which he gives permission to those dear friends who wish to print it.

Any more attention than this, which the loved ones insisted on in their letters, there is now absolutely no room for this in this helpless one's times, activities and obligations. O Allah! Give us the ability to [do] what You love and what You are pleased with, and make our latter better than our former.

Introduction and Apology

Before readers study this treatise, *Fayslah Kun Munazarah*, which was originally a detailed reply and evidenced rebuttal of Mawlawi Ahamd Rida Khan Sahib's fatwa *Husam al-Haramayn*, it is necessary to explain its fascinating history and unique nature.

This is now a 21 to 22 year old story:

In Shawwal of 1352 H, a unique debate was registered to take place in Lahore on the contents of *Husam al-Haramyn*. The most important quality of this debate was that the representatives of the two sides who were nominated on behalf of each party to agree on the initial principles, also proposed as arbitrators three extremely important and distinguished personalities in order to make this a decisive debate: first, the deceased Dr. 'Allamah Sir Muhammad Iqbal; second, the deceased 'Allamah Asghar 'Ali Sahib Ruhi (Professor at Islamiyyah College, Lahore); and third, Shaykh Sadiq Hasan Sahib B.L. (Amritsar). The three revered personalities accepted the invitation to be arbitrators.

The reality was that this was the first time in the entire history of the *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli that the representatives of the Barelwis accepted the principles of arbitration to decide this debate, and they even agreed on the abovementioned three personalities. I understood this as a great advantage, and I decided that in any circumstance, this debate must happen. In this debate, the responsibility of proving this fatwa of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, *Husam al-Haramayn*, wrong and baseless and that it is based on forgery and slander, was given by the representatives of the Deobandi group to the writer of these lines [i.e. Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani]. I wrote down my research on *Husam al-Haramayn* and that which I was going to say in front of the arbitrators in my opening speech, with the view to giving one copy at the time to the arbitrators and one copy to the opposition.

However, the outcome of the debate was that when its date was near and we – the worthless writer of these lines, Muhammad Manzur Nu'mani, the respected Mawlana Abu al-Wafa Sahib Shahajanpuri and the respected Mawlana Muhammad Isma'il Sahib Sunbhuli, who were at this time present at most of these events to resist the *fitnah* of *takfir* from Bareli – arrived at Lahore, the Barelwi representatives foresaw their defeat, nay truthfully an end to their revolutionary *fitnah* of *takfir*, so using their traditional scheming, first they turned away from the agreement of arbitration, and after this, by means of corrupt demonstrations and influential schemes, they compelled the security forces to end the debate from its very inception. In the end this is what happened, and despite all our efforts the debate could not take place. Since the full details of all these events were published at the time in the journal *al-Furqan*'s early instalments and the first edition of the treatise *Fayslah Kun Munazarah*, it is now unnecessary to repeat it.

When this debate could not take place in Lahore, this helpless one who wrote down his speech, published it as *Fayslah Kun Munazarah* in the first instalment of *al-Furqan* and afterwards in the form of a separate book. Since Mawlawi Hamid Rida Khan – the greatest successor and son of Janab Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib – was chosen by the Barelwi group as its representative in the debate that was supposed to happen at Lahore, my speech was addressed to him, and in various places he was mentioned by name. But now, 21 to 22 years later, when the need for this [refutation of *Husam al-Haramayn*] was again felt, and for this purpose I decided to revise it, I felt it was appropriate to remove this specific address and his name. If his name is still found

anywhere, understand that as a slip. Besides this, there were some changes to the wording. Even so, I feel it is necessary for me to submit by way of apology to the readers that had I found the opportunity I would have changed the style and language completely, and I would have written it in a more reader-friendly way. But since books must be printed volume-by-volume, and I had no time to rewrite the entire book with a new style and language, I was forced to publish it in this form.

I pray that from the deeds and actions that are pleasing to the Noble Lord of those accepted slaves on behalf of whom a defence was made and a response was given, even a speck of that is given to this worthless one, and by their blessing this book is made beneficial. Amin.

Muhammad Manzur Nu'mani (Allah pardon him)

The False Allegation against Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Sahib Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him) of Denying the Prophetic Sealship

On pages 12-13 of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's *Husam al-Haramayn*, from where the *takfir* of senior scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah begins, he wrote regarding Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Sahib Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him), the founder of Dar al-'Ulum Deoband:

> Qasim al-Nanotwi, the author of *Tahzir al-Nas*, who said therein:
>
> "If a new prophet were supposed in his (Allah bless him and grant him peace) time, rather if it were to occur after him (Allah bless him and grant him peace), that would not infringe on his Sealship (*khatamiyyah*), and it is only the commoners who imagine that he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the Seal of the Prophets with the meaning 'last of the Prophets' although there is no virtue in this at all according to the people of understanding" to the end of what he mentioned of irrational talk.
>
> It says in *al-Tatimmah* and *al-Ashbah* and [other books] besides them: "When one does not recognise that Muhammad (Allah Most High bless him and grant him peace) is the last of the Prophets, he is not a Muslim, because it is from the necessities." (*Husam al-Haramayn*, p. 12)

This slave [i.e. Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani] submits that the ruling of disbelief which has been levelled at Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) in this statement of Khan Sahib Barelwi is, according to the view of this helpless one, nothing besides deception and deceit. Even the aforementioned Khan Sahib is not so ignorant and dimwitted to the degree of ignorance and dimwittedness that is understood as a consequence of this fatwa. And Allah knows best.

[Proofs of the Deception of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan]

The reasons for [concluding that] the verdict is erroneous and pure distortion and deceit are:

First Reason

In quoting this text of *Tahzir al-Nas*, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib undertook the most sorrowful display of distortion (*tahrif*) after which this cannot be said to be a quote from *Tahzir al-Nas* in any way. The reality is that this text of *Tahzir al-Nas* was manufactured by joining separate sentences from three different pages! Thus, one sentence is from page 3, another from page 14, and another from page 28. Apart from the different page numbers, there is no demarcation between the sentences, and as a consequence, any [casual] reader will not be able to understand that these are from different places; rather, he will be forced to believe that this is one contiguous quote. Moreover, it does not end here. Rather, to create a content of pure disbelief, the aforementioned Khan Sahib even changed the order of these sentences. Thus, he first wrote the sentence from page 14, and then after this, the one from page 28, and then the one from page 3.

The result of Khan Sahib changing the order was that if the three sentences from *Tahzir al-Nas* were read separately in their respective places, nobody would conceive of [the author] denying the Prophetic Sealship. But, in the way he quoted the statements from *Tahzir al-Nas*, denial of the Prophetic Sealship will clearly be understood. And this is a consequence of the handiwork of his pen. Otherwise, the author of *Tahzir al-Nas* is free from this, which - if Allah wills – will be made completely clear in the coming explanation. By translating these sentences from *Tahzir al-Nas* into Arabic, which he then presented before the scholars of the two Harams, he committed even greater injustice, and insolently completed the fabrication. He undertook the work of editing the sentences from pages 14 and 28 in order to manufacture one sentence. Thus he deleted the subject from the first sentence [on page 14] and made the subject of the second sentence [on page 28] the subject of the first sentence also in such a way that no one will imagine that these are statements from different places. These actions of his are called *tahrif* in the parlance of the Qur'an.

The Mighty Qur'an describes the *tahrif* of the Bani Isra'il in the following words: "They distort the words from its places." (Qur'an 4:46) The aforementioned Khan Sahib himself in one place described such an action as "dangerous *tahrif*" (*khawfnak tahrif*). Khan Sahib in his treatise *Bariq al-Manar* wrote that a person whose hypothetical name is Zayd quoted the Qur'an to say *tattakhidhuna 'alayhim masajida* [which was made by joining three separate words of the Qur'an]. In regards to this, the aforementioned [Khan Sahib] wrote on page 17 of *Bariq al-Manar*:

> The most dangerous *tahrif* is this, that *tattakhidhuna 'alayhim masajida* has been constructed as a Qur'anic phrase, whereas this is nowhere [to be found] in the Mighty Qur'an. These three words indeed come separately in the Mighty Qur'an.

From this quote of Khan Sahib it is clearly understood that to take words from separate places of any book and join them to make one contiguous quote and then to attribute it to [the author of] that book is the most dangerous *tahrif*, and this type of *tahrif* changes the original meaning; and it is not farfetched that [as a consequence of such *tahrif*] an Islamic speech may become pure disbelief. *Tahzir al-Nas* is a book authored by a human being. If some wretched person wanted to create a content of disbelief from the speech of Allah using this type of *tahrif*, he would be able to do so, yet such a person would probably not have to undergo such strenuousness as Khan Sahib did when selecting one sentence from page 14, and another from page 28, and another from page 3.

In one chapter of the Wise Qur'an, rather one verse, this type of action would change it to a content of disbelief. For example, the Mighty Qur'an states: "Verily the righteous are in bliss, and verily the wicked are in the Fire." (82:13-4) Now, if a follower or student of Khan Sahib were to act upon the *sunnah* (practice) of Khan Sahib, and just made this degree of *tahrif* in the noble verse, of replacing "bliss" with "fire" and "fire" with "bliss," the meaning will be completely altered, and the sentence will become clear disbelief – whereas all words are from the Qur'an and only the places of two words were changed. This is only one example. If readers paid careful attention, they would be able to extract thousands of examples like this. Here, the places of words are changed. In some situations just by changing the places of vowels (*harakat*), a meaning of disbelief will be created. For example, the Noble Qur'an says: "Adam disobeyed his Lord, and erred." (20:121) Now, if some wretched person were to change the vowels of "Adam" (*adam*) and "Lord" (*rabb*) and place a *fathah* instead of the *dammah* on the *mim* of *adam* and place a *dammah* instead of the *fathah* on the *ba* [of *rabb*] [which would change the

meaning to: "His Lord disobeyed Adam"], just this amount of change will make this [originally] pure speech, the reading of which would have been a cause for reward, into pure disbelief.

Anyhow, the reality is manifest that in some instances a slight distortion of a statement changes the meaning and this creates the difference between Islam and disbelief; let alone the great alteration that will occur by slicing sentences from different places, making them into one contiguous sentence, and even changing the order of the sentences. Since Khan Sahib gave the ruling of disbelief after making this type of *tahrif*, and since this *tahrif* and alteration of the sequence of the text from *Tahzir al-Nas* completely changes the meaning and creates a meaning constituting denial of Chronological Prophetic Sealship, I was forced to believe the verdict is deliberately deceptive and purposefully distorting.

Second Reason

The second reason and the second evidence for this opinion [that the passage from *Husam al-Haramayn* is pure deceit] is that in the Arabic translation of the sentences from *Tahzir al-Nas*, Khan Sahib undertook the most sorrowful display of deceit, which is that the sentence on page 3 of *Tahzir al-Nas* is as follows:

> *magar ahl e fahm pur roshun hoga ke taqaddum ya taakhkhur zamani meh bizzat kuch fazilat nehih*
>
> "But it will become clear to the people of understanding that in coming earlier or later in time, there is intrinsically no virtue."

It is apparent that in this sentence only intrinsic virtue is negated, which according to the implied meaning (*mafhum al-mukhalafah*) necessitates the affirmation of extrinsic virtue[4], but Khan Sahib made the Arabic translation as follows:

> *ma'a annahu la fadla fihi aslan 'inda ahl al-fahm*

"Although there is no virtue in this at all according to the people of understanding."

The meaning of which is that there is absolutely no virtue in the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) being the last prophet according to the people of understanding. In this there is negation of every type of virtue, and between the two there is the difference between the earth and sky, as is not hidden.

Third Reason

The third reason and the third evidence for this opinion is that the preceding and succeeding sections of those sentences from *Tahzir al-Nas* which Khan Sahib quoted in this passage, from which their true meaning would become clear and there would be no room for misunderstanding from readers, were deleted. The evidence for this will come later.

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[4] The principle of implied meaning is taken into consideration in the case of authors. 'Allamah Shami wrote in *Radd al-Muhtar*: "[It is written] in *Anfa' al-Wasa'il*: 'The implied meaning of a writing [besides the texts of the Shari'ah] is a proof.'" (*Radd al-Muhtar* 3:644) The famous disagreement which exists between Hanafis and Shafi'is on this subject is restricted only to the texts of the Shari'ah [and does not extend to the writings of other authors]. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

Fourth Reason

The fourth reason and the fourth evidence for this opinion is that Khan Sahib's ruling of disbelief is based solely on the notion that *Tahzir al-Nas* denies the Prophetic Sealship, while from its start to its finish there is not even one word from which denial of the Messenger's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) Chronological Sealship emerges. Rather, the subject matter of *Tahzir al-Nas* is the preservation and protection of every kind of Sealship for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), whether essential, chronological, spatial or otherwise. And, specifically, with respect to Chronological Sealship, there are absolutely clear and obvious statements in it. For example on page 3, after the sentence which the Barelwi learned man quoted last, the deceased Mawlana wrote:

> Rather, the [Prophetic] Sealship is based on another consideration by which chronological finality and blocking the aforementioned door (i.e. blocking the door of claimants to prophethood) will be necessitated automatically, and prophetic excellence will be multiplied.

Likewise, on page 10 of *Tahzir al-Nas*, the deceased Mawlana, after completing his explanation of the primary hypothesis, writes:

> Therefore, if [Sealship] is absolute and general [i.e. includes all three types of Sealship: chronological, spatial and essential[5]], then the establishment of Chronological Sealship is obvious. Otherwise [i.e. if only Essential Sealship is taken as the immediate meaning of "Seal"], accepting the necessity of Chronological Sealship by implicative indication (*dalala iltizami*) is immediately established[6]. Here, the explicit statements of the Prophet, like: "You [i.e. Ali] are to me at the level of Harun to Musa, but there is no prophet after me," or as he said, which apparently is derived from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" in the aforementioned manner[7], are sufficient in this subject, because it reaches the level of *tawatur*. Furthermore, consensus (*ijma'*) has been reached on this. Although the aforementioned words were not transmitted by *mutawatir* chains, despite this lack of *tawatur* in the words, there is *tawatur* in the meaning here, just like the *tawatur* of the number of *rak'at* of the obligatory prayers, the witr prayer etc. Although the words of the narrations stating the number of *rak'at* are not *mutawatir*, just as the one who denies that is a disbeliever, in the same way, the one who denies this [i.e. Chronological Sealship] is a disbeliever.

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[5] For details, see Appendix A

[6] For details, see Appendix A

[7] Here it is worth noting the point that those hadiths like "there is no prophet after me" which clearly indicate Chronological Sealship, are according to Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim Sahib (Allah have mercy on him), derived from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" from the Noble Qur'an. Meaning, it is the opinion and claim of the aforementioned Mawlana that those hadiths in which Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said he is the final prophet and that no prophet will come after him are derived from the word "Seal of the Prophets" from the Pure Qur'an and are like an explanation and elaboration of it. This very clear statement from Hazrat Mawlana (Allah have mercy on him) shows the shamelessness of those who say he believes "Seal of the Prophets" with the meaning of last prophet is merely the opinion of the commoners. Mawlana (Allah have mercy on him) only described the restriction of its meaning to "last prophet" as the opinion of the commoners, the explanation of which will come later. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

In this passage, the deceased Mawlana establishes Chronological Sealship for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in five ways:

1. The Chronological Sealship of the Holy Prophet is established by the complete signification (*dalala mutabiqi*)[8] of the text "Seal of the Prophets." In this way, "Seal" is accepted as inclusive of Essential and Chronological [Sealship].
2. Or by means of the generality of the metaphor (*'umum al-majaz*)[9], the indication of the word "Seal" applies to both types of Sealship.
3. Or it applies directly to one of them and indirectly to the other. In all three cases, Chronological Sealship is established from the text of the Qur'an.
4. The Chronological Sealship of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is established from the *mutawatir* hadiths.
5. There is consensus of the ummah on Chronological Sealship.

After establishing Chronological Sealship of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in these five ways, the deceased Mawlana also stated that the denier of Chronological Sealship is a disbeliever in much the same way as one who denies the necessities and decisive elements of religion.

Despite such clear statements in *Tahzir al-Nas*, to say that there is denial of the Prophetic Sealship in it, if it is not severe injustice and deceit, what is it?

Furthermore, such clear statements are not found only in one or two places, but it would be difficult to miss it on nearly every page. At this juncture, I will present only one more text from *Tahzir al-Nas* for the readers in which the deceased Mawlana Nanaotwi explained Chronological Sealship of Prophethood using a wonderful and marvellous philosophical concept. On page 21 of *Tahzir al-Nas*, he writes:

> If time is to be considered as motion, it must also have an endpoint, upon reaching which the motion ends. Thus, for the motion of the series of prophethood [which is one motion within the motions of time], the point of the essence of Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is its endpoint. And this point is in relation to the chronological and spatial lines just as the apex of an angle [in which two lines meet and end at one point]. By this indication, the reality is known that his prophethood is comprehensive of cosmos and space, earth and time.

Then after a few lines on the same page, he says:

> From amongst the motions [of time] is also the motion of the series of prophethood. Thus, due to attaining the greatest endpoint, the essence of Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace), that motion returns to rest. Definitely other motions [of time besides the motion of the series of prophethood] still remain. This is also another reason for his appearance at the end of time. (*Tahzir al-Nas* p. 21)

[8] A term of logic meaning the complete meaning for which a word or phrase was coined.
[9] A juristic and linguistic principle in which the metaphorical meaning of a certain word broadens the original linguistic meaning of the word so as to incorporate its literal meaning and any other meanings intended by the metaphor.

Furthermore, this is not restricted to *Tahzir al-Nas*. Such clear statements are also found in other works of the deceased Hazrat. Just by way of example, note some passages from *Munazarah 'Ajibah*. When this topic in *Munazarah 'Ajibah* begins, the first line is:

> The Chronological Sealship of the Revered Seal of the Messengers (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is accepted by all, and it is also accepted by all that he is the first of creation [either absolutely or relatively].

Further, on page 39 he says:

> Chronological Sealship is my religion and faith, though certainly there is no cure for undeserved accusations.

Further, on page 50 he writes:

> I never denied Chronological Sealship. Rather, it would be more correct to say I left no room for the deniers to deny it. I hold the [Prophet's] superiority, and have strengthened the foothold of those who believe in this. Moreover, I believe in the prophethood of other Prophets, but I do not consider anyone equal to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace).

Further, on page 69 he writes:

> Yes it is accepted that Chronological Sealship is a unanimous creed.

Further, on page 103, he writes:

> There is no possibility of another prophet appearing after the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). I consider the one who believes this a disbeliever.

These five passages are only from *Munazarah 'Ajibah*. After this, one more passage from the deceased Hazrat Nanotwi's final book *Qiblah Nama* will be quoted. On page 1 of *Qiblah Namah*, he says:

> His religion is the last of all religions, and since religion is the name of divine decree, the one whose religion is last, he will be the chief, because [only] that person whose religion is last will be the master of all.

These were ten passages from the writings of Hazrat Qasim al-'Ulum (his secret be sanctified)[10]. Can any person of integrity and intellect say after these clear statements that this person denies the Chronological Seal of Prophethood? But there is no cure for fabricators. Regarding such fabricators, 'Arif Jami (Allah have mercy on him) said:

This they do in jest

This they say – how evil and how farfetched!

Because of this a righteous face is made ugly

And a mended heart is broken

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[10] Mawlana Muhammad Sayf al-Rahman Qasim collected all the passages from Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi's works where he stated clearly his belief in the finality of prophethood in a large work called *Hazrat Nanotwi aur Khidmat Khatm e Nubuwwat*.

The clear statements mentioned above from the various writings of the deceased Hazrat Nanotwi, and the academic and practical efforts of other Deobandi scholars against the Qadiyani group relating to this issue of the Prophetic Seal which till today appears in the form of books and debates that are known and accepted in the Islamic world[11], are more than enough for a fair person to recognise the clear position of the founder of Dar al-'Ulum Deoband and the scholars of Deoband regarding the Prophetic Seal. "And Allah guides whoever He wishes to the straight path," (Qur'an 2:213) "and those who do injustice will soon know to which place they will return." (Qur'an 26:227)

[An Explanation of the Correct Meaning of the Passages from *Tahzir al-Nas*]

After this, it will be appropriate to present with some detail the true meaning of the three sentences of *Tahzir al-Nas* which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib sliced and joined together to slander the author with denial of the Chronological Sealship of prophethood. But for this it is necessary to summarise the methodology and theoretical viewpoint of the deceased Mawlana Nanotwi with regards to the exegesis of the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" (33:40) from the Qur'an[12].

The Deceased Hazrat Nanotwi and the Exegesis of "the Seal of the Prophets"

Firstly, the hypothesis is made that the Messenger of God (may my soul and my heart be ransomed for him – Allah bless him and grant him peace) in reality has two types of Sealship:

1. One is chronological (*zamaniyyah*), which simply means he is the last of all prophets, and his time comes after all the prophets (upon them peace), and no prophet will be sent after his time.

2. The second is Essential Sealship (*zatiyyah*) which means that he embodies the attribute of prophethood essentially, and other prophets (upon them peace) accidentally. Meaning, Allah Almighty granted the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) prophethood directly, and to other prophets (upon them peace) through the medium of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Just as the Lord Almighty gave light directly to the sun and its light is not gained from the light of anything else in the world of means, in the same way Allah Almighty gave the prophetic perfections directly and without any medium to the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and his prophethood is not gained from the prophethood of any other prophet. And just as Allah Almighty granted the moon and other heavenly bodies light through the medium of the sun and they are dependent on the light of the sun for light, in the same way He granted the other prophets (upon them peace) prophethood through the medium of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Those revered personalities are truly prophets but their prophethood draws from the effusion of the prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) - and all this is with the permission of Allah Almighty. And just as the series of everything that has an accidental property ends upon something that has an essential property and does not precede it, like light that illuminates a

[11] For a list of such works, see Shaykh 'Abd al-Fattah Abu Ghuddah, *al-Tasrih bi ma Tawatara fi Nuzul al-Masih*, Dar al-Basha'ir al-Islamiyyah, Sixth Edition, 1426 H/2005 CE, pp. 49-53

[12] For a more detailed look at Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi's exegesis of this phrase, with reference to the original work and a brief look at his proofs, see Appendix A

room through the means of a mirror can be said to have originated from the mirror and the light of the mirror can be said to be a reflection of the sun, but once the sun is reached [in this process] the series comes to an end and no one can say that the sun's light is a reflection of the light of such-and-such a body from the world of means because the sun was given light directly by Allah Almighty; in the same way, it can be said in relation to the prophethood of all prophets (upon them peace) that it was acquired from the Seal of the Prophet's prophethood, but the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is a seal to this series and in relation to him none can say his prophethood was acquired from such-and-such a prophet because he is the essential prophet by the permission of Allah. This is called "Essential Seal" and this rank is called "Essential Sealship."

After this brief introduction, it should be known that the conclusion of the research of Hazrat Mawlana Nanotwi and other verifiers is that when the Mighty Qur'an calls the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) "Seal of the Prophets" both types of Sealship, essential and chronological, are established by it, while the commoners derive only one type of Sealship as its intended meaning, i.e. only chronological.

However, the disagreement between the deceased Hazrat Mawlana and the commoners is not over the Chronological Sealship of prophethood, nor is it over the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" being intended for Chronological Sealship, because Mawlana accepts both these things, but the disagreement is over whether the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" is intended for both Chronological Sealship and Essential Sealship or not. Hazrat Mawlana is a proponent of the [former] view, and he wrote a few possible scenarios for its [linguistic viability]:

1. The word "Seal" is a homonym relating to the meaning (*mushtarak ma'nawi*)[13], and just as in a homonym relating to the meaning all its components are intended, in the same way, here, in this noble verse too, both types of Sealship are intended.

2. The second scenario is that one meaning is literal and the other is metaphorical and by the method of "the generality of the metaphor" (*'umum al-majaz*)[14], such a general meaning will be taken which incorporates both types of Sealship.

   In both these scenarios, the indication of the word "Seal" is completely (*mutabiqi*) towards both types of Sealship.

3. A third scenario is that only Essential Sealship is intended by the word "Seal" in the Noble Qur'an, but since by rational and transmitted proofs, Chronological

[13] There are two types of homonyms (*mushtarak*), one relating to the word (*lafzi*) and one to the meaning (*ma'nawi*). An example of the first is "*'ayn*" which can mean "eye," "spring," "spy" and other meanings but when used in a sentence has only one meaning. An example of the second is "*nas*" (humanity) which is a homonym relating to the meaning as it comprises of both men and women, and when used in a sentence such a homonym includes all its subcategories.

[14] This is another juristic and linguistic principle where the metaphorical meaning of a certain word broadens the original linguistic meaning of the word so as to incorporate its literal meaning and any other meanings intended by the metaphor.

> Sealship is a necessary consequence of it, in this scenario too, Chronological Sealship will be indicated by the noble verse in an implicative (*iltizami*) way[15].

After writing these three scenarios on page 9 of *Tahzir al-Nas*, Hazrat Mawlana (Allah have mercy on him) states his own preference, which is that "Sealship" is a genus and Chronological and Essential Sealship are two species of it, and the Mighty Qur'an intends both types from the term "Seal," in much the same way as the noble verse, "Wine, gambling, altars and divining arrows, are only filth (*rijs*)," (5:90) where "filth" simultaneously includes both external and internal types of filth. In fact, if considered carefully, Essential Sealship and Chronological Sealship are not as far apart as wine and gambling are in terms of the degree of their difference in impurity.

The upshot of Hazrat Mawlana Qasim Sahib's (Allah have mercy on him) methodology in the exegesis of the word "Seal of the Prophets" is that Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is both the Chronological Seal and the Essential Seal, and both these types of Sealship emerge from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" in the Noble Qur'an.

The Correct Meaning of the Passages from *Tahzir al-Nas*

After this, I will present the correct meaning of the three sentences which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib joined together to create a content of disbelief:

The first sentence is from page 14, and here the deceased Hazrat is further explaining the abovementioned research on "Essential Sealship," and in this particular place, the full passage of *Tahzir al-Nas* is as follows:

> <u>The objective is that if Sealship in the meaning I presented [i.e. Essential Sealship] is determined</u> [as one of the meanings of "Seal of the Prophets"], then his position as the Seal will not be specifically in relation to past prophets, for if it were assumed[16] that in his own time any prophet appeared, even then his position as the seal will remain sound.

Khan Sahib deleted the underlined part from which every person understands that this text of the Mawlana is regarding Essential Sealship and is not in regards to Chronological Sealship, and he quoted an incomplete passage. He further committed the injustice of joining it to a sentence from page 28 in such a way that not only is the page number not mentioned but between the sentences there is no demarcation. In quoting this sentence [from page 28], there is also clear deception. Here, the full passage is as follows:

> Yes, if Sealship in the sense of an intrinsic embodiment of the quality of prophethood is taken, as this humble one has submitted, then besides Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) any other individual intended for creation cannot be considered equal to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Rather, in this way not only is his superiority over external individual prophets established, his superiority over even conceivable (*muqaddara*) individuals is established. Therefore, even <u>if it were assumed after the time of the</u>

[15] For details of how Essential Sealship necessary entails Chronological Sealship based on transmitted and rational proofs, see the explanation in Appendix A

[16] The word "assumed" (*bil farz*) is also worth noting. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) that any prophet was born, even then there would be no difference to the Muhammadan Sealship.

In this passage also, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib undertook the action of deleting the very important part from the first section – from which readers will clearly understand that here only Essential Sealship is being discussed not chronological, and they will also know the belief of the author in relation to the superiority of the Messenger (Allah blessing him and grant him peace) – and he only quoted the underlined part. He, further, joined this incomplete sentence to another incomplete sentence of page 3 without any separation between them.

Anyhow, in these sentences on pages 14 and 28, the deceased Mawlana was only discussing Essential Sealship, explaining that this is such a Sealship that supposing if in his time or after his time any prophet were to come, even then no difference will come to this Sealship of his. Here, Chronological Sealship is not discussed at all, and no sane person can say that if a prophet were to come after the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), that would cause no difference to his Chronological Sealship.

Explaining the Intent of Mawlana Nanotwi (Allah have mercy on him) from a General Example

Undoubtedly, an illustration of this explanation is exactly like the following:

In some country a pandemic spreads. One after another, many doctors are sent by the king and they treat patients according to their ability. At the end, this kind and generous king sends the greatest and most skilled doctor who was the teacher of all the doctors sent previously, and he announces: "Now after him no doctor will come. In the future whenever anybody becomes ill, the prescription of this final doctor should be used, and he will be cured, and after him whoever claims to be a doctor sent from the king, he is lying and must be executed." Then this doctor opens his clinic and multitudes and multitudes of patients attend and are cured. In one decree, the king addressed this doctor as "the seal of doctors." Now, the commoners understood from this that its meaning is only that this doctor is the last doctor in terms of time and no other doctor will be sent from the king, but one group of the people of understanding, while knowing with certainty that this is the last doctor that was sent, said that this great doctor was not called "the seal of doctors" only for the reason that he is the last doctor; rather, it is also because the medical knowledge of all the earlier doctors culminates at this great doctor, and all other doctors are his students and only learnt the science of medicine from him. This is a second reason for calling him "the seal of doctors." And these two types of sealship emerge from the term "seal of doctors." And if you think carefully you will realise that the king sent this skilled doctor at the end also because in the science of medicine he surpasses all and is more skilled than all doctors and he is their teacher, as the principle is that doctors are referred to in the order of hierarchy. After crossing all lower stages, the king sent the highest doctor. Anyhow, this doctor is not the seal in terms of time alone, rather he is also a seal in terms of perfection in the science [of medicine], and this second sealship is such that supposing that in his time and even after him another doctor were to come, there would be no difference in this sealship of his.

Readers should assess that if any stubborn adversary said with respect to this group of people of understanding that these people do not accept the seal of doctors as the last

doctor and they deny this belief, how great a distortion and unadulterated shamelessness will this be – for this group from the people of understanding, while proclaiming the essential and positional aspect of the sealship of this imperial doctor, also clearly state that with respect to time he is also the last doctor, and after him no doctor will be sent from the king, rather if any doctor after him claims to be sent from the king, he must be executed?

Till here, the correct understanding of the sentences from pages 14 and 28 was presented. The third sentence, from page 3 of *Tahzir al-Nas*, which Khan Sahib quoted last, remains. It should be understood that this sentence is in effect the beginning of *Tahzir al-Nas*. The words are as follows:

> After praising [Allah] and sending blessings [on the Prophet], before answering the question, I ask that the meaning of "the Seal of the Prophets" first be understood, so that no time is taken in answering the question. Thus, it is the understanding of the commoners that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is a Seal in the sense that his time came after the time of the earlier prophets and that he is the last of all prophets. But it will become clear to the people of understanding that in coming earlier or later in time, there is intrinsically no virtue.

There are two things worth noting from this passage: first, the deceased Mawlana is not speaking about the issue of the prophetic seal, rather he is discussing the meaning of the phrase "Seal of the Prophets"; second, taking the intent of Chronological Seal from "Seal" was not regarded as the understanding of the commoners, but its restriction to Chronological Sealship was regarded as the understanding of the commoners, and this understanding was disputed by Mawlana. Otherwise, taking the meaning of Chronological Sealship with Essential Sealship is the preferred methodology of the deceased Mawlana himself, which was demonstrated earlier, and which Mawlana explained in full detail on pages 8 and 9 of *Tahzir al-Nas*.

Anyhow, since according to Hazrat Mawlana, Chronological Sealship is also intended by the phrase "Seal of the Prophets"[17], that is why it must be accepted that here it is only the restriction [to Chronological Sealship] which Mawlana expressed as the understanding of the commoners, and Mawlana's intent is that the commoners believe that from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" only Chronological Sealship is established and besides this nothing else is established, while according to the people of understanding both Chronological and Essential Sealship are established from this phrase of the Glorious Qur'an.

From this, the objection that Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib produced against this passage of *Tahzir al-Nas* in *al-Mawt al-Ahmar* is also answered – that is:

> In this [book], taking the meaning of Chronological Seal from "Seal of the Prophets" was expressed as the understanding of the commoners while this meaning of "Seal" was stated by the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and is also narrated from his noble Companions.

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[17] A full explanation of this has passed above, and the statement of the deceased Mawlana has passed a few pages earlier that in his opinion those hadiths which clearly indicate the Chronological Sealship of prophethood like "there is no prophet after me" were derived from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets." (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

> Consequently, according to the author of *Tahzir al-Nas*, the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and all the noble Sahabah are included amongst the commoners. (Allah forbid!)

The answer is that the author of *Tahzir al-Nas* did not consider taking the intent of Chronological Sealship from "Seal" as the understanding of commoners; rather, he regarded restriction of "Seal" to Chronological Sealship as the understanding of the commoners. And restriction is not established from the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) or any Sahabi. Rather, restriction has not been stated clearly by the firmly-grounded scholars, and nobody can venture to claim such restriction, since the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said regarding the verses of the Qur'an, "For every verse there is an outward and an inward, and for every letter there is a boundary, and for every boundary there is a spectacle," from which is known that every verse of the Qur'an has at least two meanings. And if the wording of restriction is found in the speech of the scholars of the past, that is not literal restriction which the deceased Mawlana Nanotwi expressed as the understanding of the commoners, but its intent is relative restriction i.e. in relation to the false interpretation of the heretics.

Anyway, if anyone maintains this slander against the author of *Tahzir al-Nas*, that he (Allah forbid!) described the explanation of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as the understanding of the commoners, he should prove restriction from the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) or any Sahabi.

Furthermore, the deceased Mawlana in his *Maktubat* (letters) also clearly explained what is meant by "commoners" in the subject of Qur'anic exegesis. On this subject, the deceased Hazrat's words are: "Apart from the prophets and the scholars well-grounded in knowledge, all are to be counted amongst the commoners in the science of exegesis." (*Qasim al-'Ulum*, no. 1, letter 2, p. 4)

With this clear statement, to say with respect to the author of *Tahzir al-Nas* that he included the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and the noble Sahabah amongst the commoners is extreme dishonesty.

Support for Mawlana Nanotwi's Methodology in the Exegesis of "Seal of the Prophets" from the Statements of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself

After this, I also want to say that those people who derive only one meaning from the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" and restrict the meaning of "Seal of the Prophets" to this meaning, they are according to the Barelwi learned man also included amongst the commoners and not amongst the people of understanding. The aforementioned learned man wrote on page 43 of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*:

> It is narrated from Abu al-Darda' (Allah Almighty be pleased with hm): "A man will not understand with full understanding until he realises multiples viewpoints in the Qur'an." I say: Ibn Sa'd transmitted it from Abu al-Darda' (Allah Almighty be pleased with him) in *al-Tabaqat*, and Abu Nu'aym in *al-Hilyah* and Ibn 'Asakir in his *Tarikh* and Muqatil ibn Sulayman mentioned it at the start of his book on the interpretations of the Qur'an, tracing [it to the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him)] with the wording: "A man will not have understanding with complete understanding until he finds many viewpoints in the Qur'an." It says in *al-Itqan*: "Some of them interpreted it in that the intent is to find one word

> bearing multiple meanings such that one accepts them [all] when they are not conflicting; and he does not restrict it to one meaning."

From this passage of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, rather from this narration of Abu al-Darda' (Allah be pleased with him), it is clearly recognised that the person who takes only one meaning from a verse of the Qur'an and restricts it to this one meaning will be included amongst the commoners and not from the people of understanding. One will only be a complete person of understanding when multiple non-conflicting meanings are taken as the intent of a single verse, just as Hazrat Mawlana Muhammad Qasim (Allah have mercy on him) established three types of Sealship for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) from the one phrase "Seal of the Prophets," meaning essential, chronological and spatial.

All praise to Allah, the correct meaning of the three sentences of *Tahzir al-Nas* has been explained, and it is known to the readers that those people who the deceased Hazrat Nanotwi called commoners on page 3 of *Tahzir al-Nas* are commoners according to the Barelwi learned man also. After this I also want to say that from this research, the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), along with being the Chronological Seal is also the Positional Seal and Essential Seal, i.e. he is the essential prophet while other prophets are accidental prophets. His prophetic perfections were given directly by Allah Almighty while the other prophets received it through the medium of the Messenger. In this too, the deceased Hazrat Nanotwi is not alone. Rather, many earlier research scholars stated exactly this[18]. However, I feel there is no need in making the speech long and the book big by quoting their statements because Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself also stated this, after which there is no need to quote any other text. This is why I will quote one passage from him in this respect to conclude the discussion. The aforementioned learned man wrote on page 23 of his treatise *Jaza' Allah 'Aduwwah*:

> And from recurrent clear texts of the noble saints and the glorious imams and luminous scholars it is evident that every blessing, whether little or much, small or big, physical or spiritual, religious or worldly, outward or inward, from the first day till now and from now till the Resurrection, and from the Resurrection till the afterlife, and from the afterlife to eternity, whether a believer or disbeliever, obedient or disobedient, angel or man, jinn or animal, rather everything besides Allah which is acquired by anyone or has been acquired or will be acquired, its bud opens or opened or will open with his gracious breeze, and is distributed or was distributed or will be distributed from his hand. He is the secret of existence and the foundation of existence and the greatest vicegerent of Allah and the one given charge of the bounty of the world (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace). He (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) said this himself: "I am Abu al-Qasim. Allah gives and I distribute." Al-Hakim narrated it in *al-Mustadrak* and authenticated it and the critics agreed with him.

From this passage of the Barelwi learned man, it is acknowledged that whatever spiritual, bodily, worldly, religious, outward and inward blessing is acquired by anyone, it

[18] An example is the early mystic al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (d. 320) who offered a similar explanation to the phrase "Seal of the Prophets" and explicitly stated that restricting its meaning to last prophet is the view of the ignorant, as there is no [intrinsic] virtue and praise in this. For a translation of this passage, see Appendix B.

is a consequence of the generous favour of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace). And since prophethood is also one of the highest levels of spiritual blessings, therefore, this too is acquired through the medium of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) by other Prophets (upon them peace). The name of this reality according to the terminology of Hazrat Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi is "Essential" or "Positional Sealship." I will now close the discussion here, and I will turn my attention towards Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's slander against Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Sahib Muhaddith Gangohi of attributing lie to the Lord of Glory (Great is His Majesty).

The Slander against Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Sahib Gangohi (his mighty secret be sanctified) of Attributing Lie to the Lord of Glory (Great is His Magnificence) and its Reply

On page 13 of *Husam al-Haramayn*, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote in regards to Hazrat Mawlana Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him):

> Then the state of wrongdoing and deviance persisted in him until he stated in a fatwa of his, which I saw with my eyes in his handwriting and with his seal, and it was printed many times in Mumbai and [other cities] besides it along with its refutation, that the one who attributes an actual lie to Allah Almighty and explicitly states that He (Glorified and Exalted is He) has lied and this enormity emerged from Him, then don't attribute to him transgression, let alone deviance, and let alone disbelief, for indeed many of the imams have professed his opinion and the furthest of his matter is that he has erred in his interpretation.
>
> ...
>
> Those are the ones Allah Almighty has deafened and He has blinded their sights, and there is no might, nor power, except with Allah, the High, the Great. (*Husam al-Haramaym*, p. 13)

This worthless slave submits that the attribution of this fatwa to the deceased Hazrat Gangohi is outright fabrication and slander. In the first discussion, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib joined three separate passages from *Tahzir al-Nas* to create a content of disbelief. Here, even this was not possible. With praise to Allah, I can say with full confidence that these words are not found in any fatwa of the deceased Hazrat, nor are they the meaning of any fatwa. Rather, the reality is that this is a clear fabrication by either Khan Sahib or one of his rivals. With praise to Allah, we and our elders (*akabir*) declare such person a disbeliever, and an accursed apostate, who attributes lie to the Lord Almighty, and says a lie actually issued from Him. Rather, that wretched person who doubts that this is disbelief, we believe that even he is outside the fold of Islam. Hazrat Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Sahib Gangohi (his secret be sanctified) himself wrote in his published *Fatawa* on volume 1, page 118:

> The Pure Essence of the Real Almighty (Great is His Glory) is pure and transcendent from being described with the attribute of lie, Allah forbid. There is no trace of falsehood in His speech. Allah Almighty said: "And who is more truthful than Allah in speech?" (Qur'an 4:122)
>
> The person who holds the belief of this attribution towards the Real Almighty, or says this with his tongue, he has spoken a lie and is certainly an accursed disbeliever and an opponent of Qur'an, hadith and the consensus of the ummah. He can never be a believer. Allah is beyond what the oppressors say with great loftiness.

Readers should assess fairly that after such a clear and unequivocal fatwa, to slander Hazrat with believing (Allah forbid!) that the Lord has actually lied, or to say the one who

said this remains a Muslim, what degree of evil it is. Judgement will take place on the Day of Judgement!

Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's statement "which I saw with my eyes in his handwriting and with his seal" remains. In reply to this, I will only say that since in this fourteenth century [after Hijrah], a "scholar" and "mufti" sliced three separate passages from pages 3, 14 and 28 of a printed and published book, *Tahzir al-Nas*, and by distorting them created a content of disbelief and attributed that to the author of *Tahzir al-Nas*, what difficulty is there for him to fabricate a fatwa with another's handwriting and seal? Are there no fabricators or forgers in the world? It is well-known that in Bareli and its neighbouring towns there are many experts in this field whose livelihood is by means of such forgeries.

Anyhow, the fatwa of Hazrat Gangohi which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib mentioned has no basis. *Fatawa Rashidiyyah* which was printed and published in three volumes has no mention of it, rather the complete opposite of it is found in several fatwas within it, of which one was quoted above. Even assuming Khan Sahib truly saw a fatwa of this kind, it is certainly the result of the fabrication and machination of a rival "scholar" or predecessor of his.

To bury the glory and greatness of the revered scholars and masters, jealous people committed such types of actions in earlier times too. In this respect, I will relate some enlightening incidents:

The great jurist and hadith master of this ummah, Hazrat Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal (Allah have mercy on him), was on the verge of passing on from this world, and a truly envious, wretched person at that time put under his pillow some papers with writing on them that were full of heretical beliefs and views. Why? Purely for the reason that people will believe these writings to be the fruits of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal's (Allah have mercy on him) mind, and when they are found to be contrary to Islamic teachings, they will hold a bad opinion of the Imam, and his greatness and honour will be removed from people's heart. And then the light of our [i.e. the forgers] markets which due to the overwhelming effusion of the Imam was diminished will rise again.

The Imam of lexicography, 'Allamah Majd al-Din al-Fayruzabadi (Allah have mercy on him), the author *al-Qamus*, was alive. He was a famous imam and an authority for the elite and commoners. Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani (Allah have mercy on him), as great a hadith master he was, benefited from his knowledge. Envious people could not stand this widespread acceptance. In order to taint his greatness and popularity, they wrote a whole book with insults against Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him) under his name which very forcefully and stridently accused Hazrat Imam A'zam (Allah have mercy on him) of disbelief. This fabricated book was spread till it reached distant and unfamiliar places. In the Hanafi world, opposition to 'Allamah Fayruzabadi (Allah have mercy on him) reached the utmost degree of hysteria. However, the innocent 'Allamah was completely unaware of this until the book reached Abu Bakr al-Khayyat al-Baghawi al-Yamani, whereupon he wrote a letter to 'Allamah Fayruzabadi asking about the book. The aforementioned 'Allamah wrote in his reply:

> If this book has reached you, burn it, because it is a fabrication of enemies. I am from the greatest believers in Imam Abu Hanifah, and I have listed his virtues in a book.

Imam Mustafa al-Qarmani al-Hanafi, with extreme effort, wrote a detailed commentary of *Muqaddamah Abu al-Layth al-Samarqandi*. When he completed it, he came to Egypt with a view to showing it to the scholars after which he will publish it. With praise to Allah, the compilation was successful. Some jealous people were irritated by this, and they believed that by its publication the light of our markets will be diminished. They were unable to do anything besides the wickedness of fabricating [into the book] from themselves. In the chapter of the etiquettes of relieving oneself, on the issue of not facing the sun and moon while relieving oneself, they added: "because Ibrahim (upon him peace) would worship them" (Allah forbid!). 'Allamah al-Qarmani was unaware of this evil. Without knowledge of this, he presented the book before the scholars of Egypt and when their eyes fell on this proof there was severe outrage and there was uproar in all of Egypt against 'Allamah al-Qarmani. The Qadi of the time decreed that he deserved the death penalty. The poor soul fled from Egypt in the night to save his life, for otherwise, he could not give up chase without his head.

The pious knower [of Allah], Imam 'Abd al-Wahhab al-Sha'rani, wrote an autobiographical note in his book *al-Yawaqit wa al-Jawahir*:

> Likewise, they – the jealous folk – fabricated against me in my book called *al-Bahr al-Mawrud* a number of false beliefs, and they propagated those beliefs in Egypt and Makkah for around three years, and I am free from them as I explained in the introduction to the book when I revised it. The 'ulama wrote [endorsements] on it and licensed it, and the chaos did not abate until I sent to them the copy on which was their endorsements.

Only a few incidents [have been related] in this [brief] account. If historical and biographical works are consulted, one will find many similar shameful incidents of the fabrications of the wretched and envious people.

Thus, if the reality is that the Barelwi learned man was truthful in this explanation, that he [in fact] saw this fatwa of the deceased Hazrat Gangohi with the abovementioned content with his handwriting and seal, it is certainly such [i.e. fabricated]. Yet, still it would never have been permissible for Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib to issue a fatwa of disbelief based on it, until it had not been verified whether it was the fatwa of Hazrat Mawlana or not. It is a well-known and accepted principle of jurisprudence that "one handwriting resembles [another] handwriting" or "one handwriting may be confused with [another's] handwriting." Khan Sahib himself is not unaware of this. For example, to prove that it is not permissible to determine moon sighting by means of handwriting and telegram, he states:

> In all books it is clearly written: "One handwriting resembles [another] handwriting," "handwriting is not acted upon." (*Malfuzat A'la Hazrat* 2:52)

Since handwriting is not taken into consideration in such small matters as moon sighting, how can *takfir* which is a far more grave matter be established by this consideration?

Those proofs which Khan Sahib presented to authenticate the attribution of this fabricated fatwa to the deceased Hazrat Gangohi in *Tamhid e Iman* remain, which are extremely foolish and weaker than a spider's web. Readers will shortly see and ascertain this for themselves.

The aforementioned Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote in *Tamhid e Iman* with regards to this fabricated fatwa:

> It has been 18 years since this impure fatwa attributing lie to the Lord was published in 1308 with the treatise *Siyanat al-Nas* from Hadiqat al-'Ulum Press, Meerut, along with a refutation. Then in 1318 H from Gulzar e Hasani Press, Mumbai, it was printed again with a more detailed refutation. Then in 1320 H, with another stronger refutation it was printed in Tuhfat e Hanafiyya Press in Patna, Azimabad. The person who gave the fatwa died in Jumada al-Akhirah 1323 H, and remained silent till the last dying breath. He did not say "this is not my fatwa" although it was easier than rejecting a fatwa published in books. And he didn't say that its meaning is not what the scholars of Ahl al-Sunnah [meaning, himself and others] said, rather my intention was so-and-so. Disbelief is no small matter to which no attention is paid.

After removing the filth and excess, the upshot of Khan Sahib's proof boils down to the following:

1. The fatwa with a refutation was printed three times in the lifetime of the deceased Mawlana Gangohi.
2. He did not deny the attribution of this fatwa to himself, nor did he mention another meaning of it.
3. And since the matter is so grave, silence and inattention will not be taken into consideration.
4. Thus, it is established that this fatwa is his, and its meaning is also that on which I based my *takfir*.

Even though the foolishness and nonsensicalness of this proof is in no need of my examination and criticism, as every person with a little intellect can with little deliberation and consideration understand its nonsensicalness, yet it seems appropriate to shed some light on every part of it while also giving the readers some insight into the "knowledge" and "revivalism" of Khan Sahib.

Khan Sahib's first premise was that the fatwa with a refutation was printed three times. It is acknowledged in this premise that the fabricated fatwa was only printed by opponents of the Mawlana. It was never published on behalf of the Mawlana or any of his close associates. With regards to this, I will only say that if the explanation of Khan Sahib is accepted as being true and it was conceded that the fatwa was printed and published several times with its refutation in the lifetime of the deceased Hazrat Gangohi, still it is not necessary that it reached Hazrat or even that he was aware of it. If it was sent to him, the question is: Was it sent by a definite path or an indefinite one? And was Khan Sahib informed of its arrival to him? If he was, was that through definite or probabilistic means?! Giving a definitive certain verdict of disbelief while ignoring all these sides of the issue can never be allowed. Anyhow, as long as it is not established with certainty that Hazrat Gangohi (Allah have mercy on him) wrote any such fatwa, and that the definite and stipulated meaning was that which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote, based on these conjectural principles, passing a ruling of disbelief is definitely undeserved and sinful. Hazrat Mawlana Gangohi was a reclusive knower of Allah whose condition was without exaggeration:

In remembrance of the beloved, from the world is he distracted

A special part of this humble one's [i.e. Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani] time till now has been spent only in the hospitality of the people of falsehood, and till today I have been deprived of the visit of these three editions of this fabricated fatwa which were mentioned by Khan Sahib. Thus, they may exist, but this reasonably indicates that the deceased Hazrat was not even aware of this tale.

Khan Sahib's second premise was that the deceased Mawlana Gangohi did not deny the fatwa, nor did he offer any interpretation of it. In relation to this, first, it is asked that since awareness is not established, what is there to deny and what is there to interpret? And supposing he was aware of it, he felt that this impure act of ungodly fabricators does not deserve [my] attention and the decency of [my] notice, or in order to consign the affair to the Lord, he preferred to maintain silence.

[The premise] that the attribution of disbelief is no small matter such that it is not given attention remains. It is not necessary from the first assertion [i.e. the attribution of disbelief is no small matter] that the second [i.e. such that it is not given attention] follows from it [i.e. it is a *non sequitur*]. It is possible he did not believe denial was necessary because believers would not accept such filthy slander, or he thought that those repulsive people who launched this [slander] will have no place in the academic and religious world, thus there would be no consideration of their speech. Anyhow, maintaining silence may have had these reasons. Yet, regardless of these explanations, it is incorrect to say that "the matter of disbelief is grave." Undoubtedly before the advent of the "revival" of Khan Sahib, *takfir* did hold such a high importance. But, I seek forgiveness from the soul of Khan Sahib and his present [spiritual] descendents, that [I am forced to say that] from the day that the pen case of fatwa went into the intrepid hands of Khan Sahib, *takfir* became such a light matter, that Allah's refuge is sought!

[His verdicts include:] Those belonging to Nadwat al-'Uluma are disbelievers, and those who do not call them disbelievers are disbelievers. The scholars of Deoband are disbelievers, and those who do not call them disbelievers are disbelievers. The nonconformists (*ghayr muqallidin*) of the Ahl e Hadith are disbelievers. Mawlana 'Abd al-Bari Sahib Farangi Mahalli is a disbeliever, as well as another who committed the crime of joining the Khilafat Movement, his brother in Tariqa, Mawlawi 'Abd al-Majid Badayuni. Mawlawi 'Abd al-Qadir Sahib Badayuni is a disbeliever. Of disbelief he was a relentless machinegun, Allah have mercy. Besides the few groups of people in Bareli no one remains a Muslim.

Thus it is possible, believing this turmoil and uproar from Khan Sahib and those like him who call godly people disbelievers, to be the barking of dogs, he preferred to maintain silence. The principle is:

Indeed I pass by the base one who insults me

I pass by from there saying: It does not concern me

And it is possible that the deceased Hazrat Mawlana was aware and he also denied the fabricated fatwa, but Khan Sahib was unaware of this denial. How can the absence of denial be known from unawareness [of that denial]? Does absence of knowledge necessitate the absence of the thing?

The people of knowledge and possessors of fairness should assess that with all these possibilities is *takfir* still permissible? The claim was that:

> This extremely cautious person (meaning, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself) never called those enemies (Hazrat Gangohi and others) disbelievers until their explicit disbelief was not definitively, clearly, brightly and manifestly brighter than the light of the sun, in which no room [for doubt] and no interpretation emerged at all, at all, ever, ever. (*Tamhid e Iman* p. 44)

Yet the evidence is so weak that it does not even offer speculative knowledge (*zann*). If with such evidences disbelief was established, then may Allah protect Islam and Muslims. Any ignorant or madman calls a godly man a disbeliever and thinking it is an unacceptable address he turns away from it and offers no clarity before him – then according to Khan Sahib's principles he is a disbeliever. How wonderful!

If it was only this mufti and this fatwa

The work of faith will be completely undone

Here you have those statements of the noble jurists that if there were 99 possibilities of disbelief and one possibility of Islam, even then *takfir* is not permissible. And here you have in the fourteenth century this self-made reviver Sahib who with shrillness joined those purely fanciful and conjectural premises to produce this [unfounded] conclusion [that the fatwa in question was authored by Mawlana Gangohi] and a certain definitive *takfir* that whoever doubts is a disbeliever.

Look at the difference in paths, from where to where?

Till now, this was a discussion in the format of a debate (*munazarah*). However, after this, I also wish to say that when one of Hazrat Gangohi's associates saw the fabrication of the innovators towards the end of his life, he wrote a request to the deceased Hazrat enquiring about it, and Hazrat in his reply declared his innocence, and expressed his displeasure at the accursed content. Khan Sahib was aware of this, and yet he did not retract the fatwa of disbelief. By this, the intention of these champions of *takfir* and their descendents is exposed.

Thus, on 1323 H, when Hazrat Mawlana Murtaza Hasan Sahib (his shadow be lengthened)[19] saw this fabricated fatwa discussed in a treatise of a firm supporter of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, Miyanji 'Abd al-Rahman Pukhrirawi, at that time he sent a request to Gangoh asking about the reality of the fatwa with this content that was being attributed to the Hazrat. So he responded: "This is an outright fabrication and pure slander. Can any sensible person write such a thing?"

The answer of the deceased Hazrat was quoted in many treatises of Mawlana Sayyid Murtaza Hasan Sahib (his shadow be lengthened) including *al-Sahab al-Midrar* and *Tazkiyat al-Khawatir*, and all of these treatises were sent to Khan Sahib in his lifetime.

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[19] Mawlana Sayyid Murtaza Hasan Chandpuri (1868-1951) was alive at the time of writing this book and on its first publication date in 1933 CE. He was a graduate of Dar al-'Ulum Deoband where he studied under some of its greatest teachers, including Mawlana Muhammad Ya'qub Nanotwi, Shaykh al-Hind Mawlana Mahmud al-Hasan Gangohi, Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi and Mawlana Dhu al-Fiqar 'Ali Deobandi. He excelled in the rational sciences under Mawlana Ahmad Hasan Amrohi in Kanpur. He earned his livelihood by working as a Hakim having attained adequate knowledge and experience in this profession from his father, a renowned Hakim of his city. In the spiritual path, he gained successorship (*khlilafa*) in the Chisti Sabiri chain from Hakim al-Ummah Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Thanawi.

Also, when this slander first began to spread in Bareli, from here, too, some associates of the Hazrat sent a request inquiring about the reality of the situation. In this answer, the deceased Hazrat also expressed his displeasure, and this written answer of the deceased Hazrat was witnessed by Khan Sahib but it had no effect on his heart of stone, and the fear of the Lord did not make him ready to admit his error.

"Then your hearts hardened thereafter, so they are as stones or stronger in hardness: and verily of stones there are some from which gush forth rivers, and verily there are of them some that cleave asunder and water issues from them, and verily there are of them some that fall down in awe of Allah." (Qur'an 2:74)

These are those conditions and realities because of which I am forced to believe and say that Khan Sahib's verdict of disbelief from the very first day was not based on a misunderstanding or ignorance, but the reality is that it was born purely out of the unreserved flame of spite, love of fame and indulgence. "And those who do injustice will soon know to which place they will return." (Qur'an 26:227)

The Impure Slander against Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) of Diminishing the Rank of the Leader of the Prophets (Allah bless him and grant him peace)

Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote on page 15 of *Husam al-Haramayn*:

> These are followers of the accursed Satan of the horizons, and they are also scions of the one who attributes lies [to Allah], al-Gangohi, for indeed he [i.e. Mawlana Khalil Ahmad al-Saharanpuri] stated clearly in his book *al-Barahin al-Qat'iah* – and by Allah it only cuts (*qati'ah*) what Allah has ordered to tie – that their master, Iblis, has more expansive knowledge than the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace). This is his deplorable text with his despicable wording:
>
> "Indeed this expanse in knowledge was established for Satan and the Angel of Death by clear text. Which decisive text is there regarding the expansive knowledge of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) such that all texts will be rejected because of it and a *shirk* will be established?"
>
> He wrote before this:
>
> "Indeed this *shirk* does not contain a mustard seed of faith."

Then after transmitting some "blessings"[20] on the author of *Barahin*, he wrote after a few lines:

> Indeed it says in *Nasim al-Riyad* as has preceded:
>
> "Whoever says, 'so-and-so is more learned than him (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace),' indeed he has faulted him and degraded him, so he is an insulter, and the ruling on him is the ruling of an insulter without distinction. We make no exception of any situation thereof, and all of this is consensus from the Companions (Allah be pleased with them)."
>
> Then I say: Look at the effects of Allah's seal, how it makes the seeing blind, and how he chooses blindness over guidance. He believes in encompassing earthly knowledge for Iblis, and when the mention of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace), comes, he says, "This is *shirk*." *Shirk* is only to affirm a partner for Allah Almighty, so when affirming something for any of creation is *shirk*, it will definitely be *shirk* for all creation, since it is not possible for anyone to be a partner of Allah Almighty. So look, how he believes that Iblis is His (Glorified is He) partner, and partnership is negated only from Muhammad (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace).
>
> Then look at the cover of the anger of Allah Almighty over his sight. He demands for the knowledge of Muhammad (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) a clear text, and he will not be satisfied with it until it is decisive (*qat'i*), and when

[20] Meaning, insults and curses, but such unjustified insults and curses serve to elevate the rank of the pious, so are in fact counted as "blessings."

he comes to negating his (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) knowledge, in this explanation on page 46, six lines before this disgraceful [statement of] disbelief, he himself adheres to a false hadith having no basis in the religion and ascribes it falsely to one who did not transmit it but refuted it with a clear refutation, where he said:

"Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq (his secret be sanctified) narrated from the Prophet (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) that he said: 'I do not know what is behind this wall.'"

However, the Shaykh (Allah Almighty sanctify his secret) only said in *Madarij al-Nubuwwah*, as follows:

"Here this is made problematic because it has come in some narrations that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: 'I am only a slave. I do not know what is behind this wall.' The answer to this speech is it has no basis, and it is not valid to transmit it."

So look at how he draws proof from, "don't come near Salah" and omits, "while you are drunk."[21]

In this passage, to fulfil his longing to pass the judgement of disbelief, the injustice which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib committed against honesty and integrity, will only be reckoned by the One, the Irresistible. His interrogation will, if Allah wills, take place tomorrow [on the Day of Judgement]. However, fair-minded people in this world can also determine the degree of dishonesty in the explanation of this claimant to being a reviver (*mujaddid*) and in his verdict.

In this passage, Khan Sahib makes the following objections against the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*:

1. He (Allah forbid!) made the blessed knowledge of Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) less than the knowledge of the accursed Satan's.

2. He regarded the affirmation of encompassing knowledge of the world for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as *shirk*, yet he affirmed this [knowledge] for the accursed Satan, while whatever is *shirk* to affirm for any creature, its affirmation for any other creature is certainly also *shirk*, so it is as though the author of *Barahin* (Allah forbid!) made Satan a partner with Allah.

3. He demanded decisive texts for the knowledge of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and when negating the knowledge of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), he relied on a baseless narration.

4. Moreover, he mendaciously attributed the narration of this hadith to such a person who didn't transmit it but quoted it in order to robustly refute it.

This is a summary of the entire passage by Khan Sahib.

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21 Meaning, he committed the same degree of dishonesty in quoting Shaykh 'Abd Haqq al-Dihlawi as one who quotes the Qur'an to say "Don't come near Salah" while failing to mention the part immediately after it "while you are drunk." (Qur'an 4:43)

Before presenting the answer, I will outline a number of introductory principles:

First Introductory Principle

There are two types of knowledge: intrinsic (*dhati*) and granted (*'ata'i*). Intrinsic knowledge is that which is from oneself, not granted [by another]; and granted knowledge is that which somebody gave and taught. The first type is exclusive to Allah Almighty. Whatever knowledge is possessed by creation is all granted and taught. If someone were to affirm intrinsic knowledge for any saint, prophet or angel, it is *shirk* by consensus. This is a famous principle, agreed-upon by the entire ummah. I believe in proving it, it will suffice to quote the statements of Khan Sahib Barelwi as:

The accuser is a thousand times weightier than your witness

The aforementioned [Khan Sahib] wrote in *Khalis al-I'tiqad*, page 28:

> Knowledge is certainly from those attributes that for other than the Lord, it can [only] be acquired through the bestowal of the Lord. Thus, in terms of intrinsic (*dhati*) and acquired (*'ata'i*), its categorisation is certain (*yaqini*). The division of [knowledge into] encompassing and non-encompassing is intuitive (*badihi*). From these [subcategories of knowledge], those that are accepted as exclusive to Allah are the first from each category, meaning, intrinsic [knowledge] and absolutely all-encompassing [knowledge].

Furthermore, in the same *Khalis al-I'tiqad*, he wrote on page 32:

> Undoubtedly, for other than the Lord, there is not even one atom of intrinsic knowledge. This belief is from the necessities of religion, and its denier is a disbeliever.

And, in the "First Section" (*al-nazr al-awwal*) of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*, on page 6, he wrote:

> The first (i.e. intrinsic knowledge) is restricted to the Master (Glorified and Exalted is He) and is impossible for other than Him. And whoever affirms a part of it, even if less than less than an atom for any of the worlds, he has disbelieved, associated a partner [with Allah], and is destroyed and ruined.

Second Introductory Principle

In relation to every atom in existence, Allah Almighty has infinite knowledge, and since no creature can have unlimited knowledge, it can be said that no creature can attain encompassing knowledge of the true reality of even one atom.

In proving this, I will also rely on the statements of Khan Sahib Barelwi. The aforementioned [Khan Sahib] wrote on page 9 of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*:

> Rather, He (Glorified and Exalted is He) has sciences in every atom that are unending, because every atom in relation to every [other] atom that was, will be or can be, has a relationship in terms of nearness, distance and direction, different in time with different places that are actual or possible from the first day till eternity; and all is known to Him (Glorified and Exalted is He) in actuality, so

> His knowledge (Great is His Glory) is infinite multiplied by infinite multiplied by infinite.
>
> And it is accepted that the knowledge of creation does not encompass in any single moment an infinite quantity [of knowledge] in actuality with complete detail whereby every particular is distinguished in that [knowledge] from its counterpart with complete distinction.

Furthermore, in the same *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah* on page 212, he wrote:

> I have explained that He (Glorified is He) has in each and every atom sciences that are non-ending, so how can anything be disclosed to creation in the way it is disclosed to the Creator (Great and Glorious is He)?

Third Introductory Principle

In establishing a point of belief, decisive evidence is necessary, and in negating [a point of belief], merely the absence of proof is enough evidence. This is why in refuting the false thoughts and corrupt beliefs of the idolaters, the Qur'an mentions that these are personal imaginings and Satanic whispers, and there is no evidence or proof presented from the Lord.

Furthermore, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself in *Inba' al-Mustafa* accepts that in establishing beliefs decisive evidence is necessary.

Fourth Introductory Principle

There are two types of knowledge: one which is related to religion, like all religious sciences of the Shari'ah; and second, that which is not related to religion, like knowledge of the particular states of Zayd, 'Amr, Ganga Persaud, Mr Churchill etc., knowledge of the number of insects and creepy crawlies on the earth and fish in the sea, and knowledge of their special properties, their general movements, consumption of food and drink, excretion and defecation. It is apparent that knowledge of these things has no relation to religion, and nor does knowledge of them have any impact on human perfection, and nor is absence of it a defect!

Although this principle is intuitive and everyone possessing even a little intellect accepts it, for some time now, the spiritual descendants of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib have begun to deny it with persistent shrillness, claiming that there is no knowledge in the world that has no relation to religion and that has no impact on human perfection. Thus, here too, I feel it would be sufficient to just present one quote of Khan Sahib. The aforementioned [Khan Sahib] in his *Malfuzat*, Part 2, page 62, wrote: "Simiya (letter magic) is an impure science." From this short but significant sentence of Khan Sahib, it is immediately understood that some knowledge is impure, and it is obvious that the science that is impure cannot be religious knowledge, nor can it be a reason for perfection in any person.

Fifth Introductory Principle

The knowledge which the Shari'ah has praised and encouraged people towards and which causes divine pleasure is only that knowledge which has a connection to religion and which human perfection is dependent on. For example, the Mighty Qur'an says: "Are those who know and those who do not know equal?" (Qur'an 39:9) And in another place

it says: "Allah raises those who believe from you and those given knowledge by degrees." (Qur'an 58:11) It is obvious that by these verses, neither English is intended, nor Sanskrit nor any other language, nor science, nor geography, nor magic, nor poetry, rather only religious knowledge is intended, and that which is beloved to the Lord. In a noble hadith, it says: "Seeking knowledge is obligatory on every Muslim." And in another hadith it says: "Verily, the prophets do not bequeath dinar or dirham. They bequeath only knowledge. So whoever takes from it, takes a plentiful share." In these noble hadiths, the intent is the science of Shari'ah and the science of religion. Which wretched person can say that gaining worldly sciences is also a religious obligation, and which person deprived of insight can say that such futile sciences as magic and sorcery are also a prophetic inheritance? Anyhow, it is completely intuitive that the knowledge which the Shari'ah encourages towards and which has an impact on human perfection is religious knowledge. In fact, the Shari'ah has forbidden delving into those matters which are useless and irrelevant. The Messenger of the Lord (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "From the excellence of a man's Islam, is his avoidance of what does not concern him."

A person asked Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib questions regarding the Ta'ziyah ceremony and related matters. Amongst them, the twelfth question, regarding the martyrs of Karbala, Allah be pleased with them, was: "After martyrdom, which blessed heads were sent to Damascus and which were returned?" In answer to this, the aforementioned Mawlawi Sahib wrote: "It says in a hadith that the excellence of a man's Islam is to leave irrelevant matters." The complete fatwa of Khan Sahib in which this question and answer is included was printed and published several times in various places, and its original with his seal and handwriting is preserved with me, and if here as in all his fatwas, full attention was given to its [correct] transmission as I have heard, then most probably here too its transmission is preserved. There is no date included in the fatwa, and on the cover, besides the seal of Dak Khana, nothing else is clear. After some deliberation, I concluded based on overwhelming conjecture that this fatwa was sent from Bareli to Dak Khana in October of 1920 – and Allah knows best!

From this fatwa of Khan Sahib, it is clearly understood that there is even some knowledge that is irrelevant or useless, which is better not to acquire. It is also obvious that the question in response to which Khan Sahib wrote this was not related to Zayd, 'Amr, Bakr, animals, beasts, the fish of the sea, frogs or the creepy crawlies of the earth, but the question was regarding the blessed heads of the noble Ahl al-Bayt and the great martyrs. And in answering this, Khan Sahib said the excellence of a man's Islam is to avoid irrelevant matters.

Sixth Introductory Principle

It is possible someone lower in rank may have more extensive knowledge than one higher in rank in those sciences which are not a cause for human perfection, and which mankind were not ordered by the Lord to attain - for example, particular daily events, and the personal and domestic affairs of particular individuals; and [it is possible] one despised [may have more extensive knowledge in these matters] than one accepted [by Allah]. Rather, in irreligious and unnecessary matters, it is possible that at times the knowledge of a non-prophet is more than a prophet's. However, in the sciences of the Shari'ah and the necessary matters and the foundations of religion, the prophet's knowledge is always more vast, because in the transmission of those sciences they are the greatest medium for the entire nation, and it is through them that these sciences

reach the individuals of the community. Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (Allah have mercy on him) wrote in *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*:

> It is possible that a non-prophet is higher than a prophet in sciences on which his prophethood does not depend. (5:495)

Seventh Introductory Principle

Due to unawareness of those matters unrelated to and unnecessary of religion, there is no diminishment in the position of the revered prophets (upon them peace) and other accepted [people of Allah], and nor does this affect perfection in their knowledge. Rather, such an understanding is extremely foolish and demonstrates a high degree of ignorance regarding the post of messengership.

'Allamah Qadi 'Iyad, who had such love for the Revered Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) that is worthy of imitation, in explaining this point, wrote in *al-Shifa'*:

> As for those from them [i.e. the sciences] which are related to the affair of the [material] world, infallibility is not a condition with respect to the prophets, in that the prophets are unaware of some of them or believe them to be contrary to what they are [in reality]. There is no defect in them in this, as their aspiration is towards the afterlife and its events and the matter of the Shari'ah and its laws, while the affairs of the world are in conflict with these [things]; as distinguished from other than them of the worldly people "who know the outward of the lower life and are unaware of the afterlife." (Qur'an 30:7) (*Al-Shifa*, p. 254)

Then, after supporting this statement with a number of noble hadiths, he wrote on page 302:

> The equivalent of this and its likes from the affairs of the world which do not involve the science of religion, nor its belief, nor its teaching, what we mentioned (i.e. being unaware of them) is possible for him as there is no defect or demotion therein. They are only ordinary things known to those who experience them and make them his concern and occupies himself with them. The heart of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), however, was filled with gnosis of [Allah's] lordship and his soul was brimming with the sciences of the Shari'ah. (*Shifa' Qadi 'Iyad*, p. 302)

Anyhow, if knowledge from those matters which are unrelated to the matters of religion is acquired by a non-prophet and has not been acquired by a prophet, there is no defect in the prophet (upon him peace) in this, because in these matters the revered prophets (upon them peace) have no specific connection. This is why the Messenger of the Lord (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "You are more learned in the affairs of your world." (*Sahih Muslim*) This narration of *Sahih Muslim* is an extremely clear and bright proof for our position. Furthermore, he said: "When it is something from the matter of your world, you are more learned about it. And when it is something from the matter of your religion, [refer it] to me." Ahmad and Muslim narrated it from Anas, and Ibn Majah from Anas and 'A'ishah both, and Ibn Khuzaymah from Abu Qatadah. (*Kanz al-'Ummal,* 6:116)

Eighth Introductory Principle

If a low-ranking person has the knowledge of some particular events and a higher-ranking one does not possess it, or a follower possesses it while the prophet does not, merely because of this, that lower-ranking person in relation to the higher-ranking one and that follower in relation to the prophet cannot be said to be "more knowledgeable." For example, the information related to the material novelties and created inventions of today acquired by an atheist of Europe, was certainly not acquired by Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him) and Imam Malik (Allah have mercy on him). The knowledge in inventing a gramophone which was possessed by its non-Muslim inventor was certainly not possessed by the pure Hazrat Ghawth (Allah have mercy on him). However, which idiot will dare to say that because of these material and worldly matters, those atheists of Europe are more knowledgeable than Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him), Imam Malik (Allah have mercy on him) and Shaykh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani (Allah have mercy on him)? The knowledge related to cinema and theatre possessed by a sinful and wicked person, nay a disbeliever and polytheist showman, was certainly not acquired by a great, great Allah-fearing person. Can any obfuscator say that every showman is more knowledgeable than this scholar and whatever is a consequence of this? The knowledge that criminals possess regarding their crimes did not even come to the minds of the revered scholars of religion; so then is every thief, robber, cutpurse, pickpocket and drunkard entitled to claim superiority in knowledge to a scholar of religion? And is it not a reality that filth-eating insects have more knowledge of the taste of filth which every honourable human being is unaware of? So is now every insect more knowledgeable than human beings?

Anyhow, it is a completely intuitive principle that merely because a person possesses a great quantity of knowledge in those sciences which are unrelated to religion and those sciences which have no bearing on human perfection, he cannot be called "more knowledgeable." He can only be called such when he maintains superiority in the perfect sciences and religious knowledge.

Ninth Introductory Principle

In the Qur'an and hadith, many examples can be found in the pure life of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) where he became aware of many particular events through other people, which at the time, the Prophet (Allah grant him peace) was unaware of. Several examples are given below:

1. In the Battle of Tabuk, 'Abd Allah ibn Ubayy, the hypocrite said: "Do not spend upon those who are with the Messenger of Allah." (Qur'an 63:7) Furthermore, in that gathering he also said: "Indeed if we return to Madinah, the honourable ones will expel the despised." (Qur'an 63:8) This foolish talk was heard by Hazrat Zayd ibn Arqam (Allah be pleased with him), and he related it to his uncle, who mentioned it to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) summoned 'Abd Allah ibn Ubayy and his companions, and asked them what it was that happened. Those hypocrites swore an oath that they did not say this. The Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) believed them and belied Zayd ibn Arqam (Allah be pleased with him). Zayd said: "A depression overcame me the like of which had never afflicted me [before and since], such that I avoided coming out of the house. Then Allah Almighty revealed the first verses of Surah Munafiqun, [by which the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) became aware that those hypocrites really did say those

unbecoming words]. Then, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) summoned me and recited the verses unto me and he said, 'Verily, Allah has vouchsafed your truthfulness.'" (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Kitab al-Tafsir*)

2. In regards to some hypocrites, it says in Surah Tawbah: "And among those Bedouins who are around you there are hypocrites, and among the people of Madinah as well. They are adamant on hypocrisy. You do not know them. We know them." (9:101) It is understood from this verse that in the era of prophethood, in Madinah itself and surrounding areas, there were such hypocrites regarding whom Allah Almighty said: "O beloved! You do not know them." And it is obvious that those hypocrites themselves had knowledge of their own hypocrisy.

3. "Among men there is one whose speech, in this life, attracts you; he even makes Allah his witness on what is in his heart, while he is extremely quarrelsome." (2:204) In *Tafsir Ma'alim al-Tanzil* and *Tafsir Khazin* and others it is mentioned that this verse was revealed regarding Akhnas ibn Shariq al-Thaqafi. In appearance, this person was very handsome and he possessed a very noble tongue. He came before the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and pretended to be a Muslim, and he displayed a lot of affection, and on this he took an oath by the Lord. The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) maintained close companionship with him, yet al-Akhnas was a hypocrite. *Tafsir Khazin* says: "It was revealed about him, 'Among men there is one whose speech attracts you,' i.e. he pleases you and you approve of him and he is exalted in your heart." (*Khazin*, 1:161) From this verse and the reason for its revelation, it is understood that the inward condition of Akhnas ibn Shariq was hidden to the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and it is obvious that this wretched person certainly knew his own condition.

4. Likewise, regarding one group of the hypocrites, it was said to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace): "And if you see them, their physiques would attract you, and if they speak, you would listen to their speech" (63:4) In *Tafsir Khazin* and *Tafsir Ma'alim al-Tanzil* under the exegesis of "if they speak, you would listen to their speech," it says: "Meaning, you think that he spoke the truth."

   From these three verses in terms of the meaning that is common between them, it is known that in the blessed time of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), within the Pure City itself, there were some inwardly dark hypocrites whose hypocrisy or the degree of their hypocrisy was unknown to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Based on their outward state, he assumed them to be pious, and he believed their lies to be true, yet those wicked people were certainly aware of their own condition; even if afterwards through the means of revelation, the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) too became aware.

5. After this, I will present only one more verse in this regard. The Lord states: "We have not taught him poetry, nor is it fitting for him." (Qur'an 36:69)

From this verse it is very clearly understood that he was not granted knowledge of poetry, yet such knowledge was acquired by even the disbelievers.

Anyhow, the Qur'an attests to the reality that knowledge of some unnecessary matters and matters unrelated to the affairs of messengership were not granted to the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), while it was acquired by others, even idolaters and disbelievers. But because of this, to label those others as having more expansive knowledge than the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is extremely stupid and the highest level of idiocy and deviance.

If such events were collected from the hadiths, many thousands would be found. Here only a few hadiths will be presented briefly by way of example:

1. In *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim* and *Sunan Abi Dawud*, it is narrated from Hazrat Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) that a black woman would sweep the mosque. One day the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not find her, so he asked about her condition. He was told that she passed away. The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "Why did you not inform me?" After this, he said: "Show me her grave." They guided him to her grave and he prayed over her.

   It is known from this hadith that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was unaware of this woman's passing, and the Sahabah (Allah be pleased with them) were aware. Moreover, the Sahabah even showed the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) the whereabouts of her grave.

2. In *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, it is narrated from Hazrat Zayd ibn Thabit that he said: "One day we went out with the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace), whereupon the gaze of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) fell upon a new grave, and he said: 'What is this (meaning, whose grave is it)?' He was told it is the grave of such-and-such a person from such-and-such a tribe and he died in the afternoon. Because the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was taking an afternoon siesta and also fasting, they thought it better not to wake him. Thereupon, the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) stood up and he formed rows with the people behind him and he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) prayed over the grave. Then he said: 'No deceased person dies amongst you as long as I am in your midst except you [ought to] inform me of it, because my prayer is a mercy for him.'"

   From this narration too, a very clear light is shed on our claim. And [the hadith does] not [describe] only a single momentary event; rather, it is understood as a general unchanging condition in his life.

3. In *Sahih al-Bukhari* and the four *Sunan*s, it is narrated from Hazrat Jabir (Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) would bury the martyrs of Uhud in pairs within separate graves, and when preparing the graves he would ask the people: "Which of the two

had memorised more of the Qur'an," and when one of them was pointed to, he would put him inside the grave first.

4. In *Sahih Muslim* and *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, it is narrated from Hazrat Anas (Allah be pleased with him) that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) heard some sound from a certain grave and he said: "When did this one die?" They said: "He died in the time of [pre-Islamic] ignorance," and he was pleased by this [news].

5. In *Musnad Ahmad* and *Musnad al-Bazzar*, it is narrated from Hazrat 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) that in one battle the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was brought cheese, so he asked: "Where was this made?" They said: "In Persia."

6. In *Sunan Abu Dawud* and *Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, it is narrated from Abyad ibn Hammal that he came before the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and requested him to assign him [the mines of] salt as fief at Marib. So he assigned it to him. When he returned, a man in the meeting asked: "Do you know what you have assigned him as fief, O Messenger of Allah? You have assigned him the perennial spring water." Thereupon, he took it back from him.

   From this narration it is known that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) initially did not know the special quality of this land, and because of not knowing this, he assigned it to Abyad ibn Hammal. But after that Sahabi informed him, he became aware of the quality of that land, that it is a place for public consumption, so the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) took it back from him.

7. In *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim* and *Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, it is narrated from Hazrat 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) that "the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) went to relieve himself, and I brought a water jug for the him (Allah bless him and grant him peace) to perform wudu from, and when he came out, he asked: 'Who put this [here]?' When he was informed, he said: 'O Allah! Give him understanding in religion and teach him [correct] interpretation.'"

   From this narration it is known that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) became aware of the [identity of the] one who put the water in that place through another person.

8. In *Sunan Abi Dawud*, it is narrated from Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) that: "I was feverish in the mosque, when the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) approached. When he entered the mosque and asked: 'Who has seen the Dawsi lad [meaning, Abu Hurayrah]?' three times, a man said: 'O Messenger of Allah! He is that feverish one at the side of the mosque,' so he approached, walking, until he reached me and placed his hand on me."

From this narration it is clearly known that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was unaware of Hazrat Abu Hurayrah (Allah be pleased with him) being in the mosque, and only after being informed by another individual did the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) become aware of this.

9. In *Musannaf ibn Abi Shaybah*, it is narrated from 'Abd al-Rahman ibn al-Azhar: "I saw the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in the Year of Conquest while I was a young lad, asking about [the whereabouts of] the house of Khalid ibn al-Walid."

10. In *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Sahih Muslim*, *Sunan al-Nasa'i* and *Sunan Abi Dawud*, it is narrated from Hazrat 'Abd Allah ibn 'Abbas (Allah be pleased with them) that Khalid ibn al-Walid informed him that he entered with the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) upon Maymunah, the wife of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), who was his maternal aunt and also the maternal aunt of Ibn 'Abbas, and he found near her a roasted lizard which her sister Hafidah bint al-Harith brought from Najd. She offered the lizard to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and rarely would he move his hand towards food until he was told about it and it was identified for him, so when Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) lowered his hand to the lizard, a woman from those present said: "Inform the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) what you offered him." They said: "It is a lizard, O Messenger of Allah." So Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) lifted his hand.

    From this narration it is known that when a lizard was presented to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), he was unaware that it is a lizard, such that he even lowered his hand to eat from it, and afterwards when someone informed him, he became aware of this and lifted his hand.

11. Al-Tabrani in *al-Mu'jam al-Kabir* narrated from Hazrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) that once he had some poor quality dates which he sold in exchange for good quality dates for half its weight, and then he brought them in the presence of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). He (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said that "till today I have not seen such good quality dates, how did you come by this O Bilal?" So he told him what he did, and he said: "Go, and return it to its [previous] owner [as it had become interest]."

12. In *Musannaf 'Abd al-Razzaq*, it is narrated from Hazrat Abu Sa'id al-Khudri (Allah be pleased with him) that once the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) came to one of his wives, and there he saw some excellent quality dates, so he asked: "How did you come by this?" They said: "We exchanged two *sa'* for one *sa'*," so he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "There is no two *sa'* for one *sa'* and no two dirhams for one dirham [i.e. it is interest, so return it]."

    From these two narrations it is known that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) became aware of these two impermissible transactions after being informed by another person.

13. Ibn Abi Shaybah narrated in his *Musannaf* and Imam Ahmad in his *Musnad* and Abu Nu'aym in his *Kitab al-Ma'rifah* from Hazrat 'Abd Allah ibn Salam; and 'Abd al-Razzaq from Abu Umamah al-Bahili; and Ibn Jarir from Ibn Sa'idah, that when the verse "In it are men who love to cleanse themselves: and Allah loves the clean" (9:108) was revealed with respect to the people of Quba, the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) summoned the people of Quba and asked them: "What is the purification for which you have been specified in this verse?" And in some narrations: "And what is your purification?" And in some of them: "Verily Allah has praised you greatly regarding purification."

14. In *Sahih Muslim*, *Jami' al-Tirmidhi*, *Sunan Abi Dawud* and *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, it is narrated from Hazrat Jabir (Allah be pleased with him) that a slave came to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bess him and grant him peace) and gave him allegiance of migration [to Madinah], and he was unaware that he is a slave. Thereupon, his master came to claim him. The Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to him: "Sell him to me." He bought him for two black slaves. He did not accept allegiance from anybody thereafter until he inquired whether he was a slave or not.

15. In *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Jami' al-Tirmidhi* and *Sunan Abi Dawud*, it is narrated from Hazrat Zayd ibn Thabit that: "He [i.e. the Prophet (peace be upon him)] ordered me to learn Syriac[22], and he promised by Allah that he does not trust the writing of the Jews. Half a month had not passed before I learnt Syriac, and I gained a particular skill therein. Then it was I who wrote letters to the Jews on behalf of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and it was I who read to him their letters."

    In this narration, the danger from the Jews that was mentioned will only be actualised if the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not know the Syriac language, the knowledge of which was in this time possessed by the Jews. Although, to support this claim, it is enough that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was unlettered (*ummi*) which is established from the Qur'an, but I quoted this narration as it is a practical explanation of this quality, after which there is no room for interpretation, as interpretation is only effective in statements and phrases, not in [such] incidents and states.

From these five verses and fifteen hadiths, it is established that in the time of messengership, there were many particular events which presented itself [before the Muslim community] which the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was unaware of while others were. But simply because of those pieces of information - which have no specific connection to the matters of religion and piety and the obligations of prophethood and messengership - it cannot be said they were more knowledgeable than the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), nor can it be said that because of

[22] In Madinah, only Jews knew the Syriac language. If any letter came in the Syriac language, they would read it to him (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and if he had to send a letter, they would write it for him. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

the absence of those sciences in the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) there is some deficiency in his perfect knowledge.

'Allamah Sayyid Mahmud al-Alusi, the mufti of Baghdad (Allah have mercy on him), wrote in his unparalleled exegesis, *Ruh al-Maani*:

> I do not believe in the loss of perfection with absence of knowledge of particular worldly matters, like the absence of knowledge in what Zayd is doing for example in his house and what transpires in his day and his morrow. (*Ruh al-Ma'ani*, 8:35)

Tenth Introductory Principle

If Zayd had knowledge of a thousand things, and 'Amr of hundreds of thousands and millions of things, but within those thousand pieces of information of Zayd there were ten or twenty which were not acquired by 'Amr, because of those ten or twenty pieces of information, Zayd cannot be unrestrictedly called "more knowledgeable than 'Amr." Indeed it can be said that Zayd has such-and-such knowledge which 'Amr does not have. For example, Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him) had acquired millions of sciences of the Shari'ah, and Ibn Rushd too was especially gifted in the sciences of Shari'ah, but did not have even a tenth of a tenth of the knowledge of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah. However the knowledge of Greek philosophy which Ibn Rushd acquired was certainly not acquired by Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him) because in his time Greek philosophy had not been translated into Arabic. But because of this it cannot be said Ibn Rushd was more knowledgeable than Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him).

Similarly, Hazrat Imam al-Shafi'i (Allah have mercy on him) and Imam Ahmad (Allah have mercy on him), Imam al-Bukhari (Allah have mercy on him) and Imam Muslim (Allah have mercy on him) acquired thousands of sciences of the Book and Sunnah, but in [the field of] history and biographies the knowledge possessed by Ibn Khaldun and Ibn Khallikan was certainly not all possessed by them, because within the knowledge of Ibn Khallikan and Ibn Khaldun were many historical events which occurred after the death of those imams. But because of this, no historian of today can say that Ibn Khallikan and Ibn Khaldun were more knowledgeable than those imams of religion. Based on this, the knowledge that a driver possesses regarding driving and the information regarding shoe-making acquired by a cobbler was certainly not acquired by Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, but in my view, even the highest-ranking idiot will not dare say that because of this the driver and cobbler have more extensive knowledge than the aforementioned Khan Sahib.

Anyhow, whenever any one person is called "more knowledgeable" absolutely with respect to another person, that is only in terms of the totality of sciences, and specifically in terms of religious and Shar'i sciences. And if any person concedes Zayd's expanse in any specific science, but does not accept this for 'Amr, it is not a necessary consequence of this that he has accepted Zayd as more knowledgeable than 'Amr, unless that science is from the lofty perfecting sciences; especially when the aforementioned person accepts thousands and millions of sciences of the higher rank for 'Amr which he does not ascribe to Zayd, nay to anybody in the entire world.

"These were ten in total." (Qur'an 2:196)

Till here, ten introductory principles [were presented]. Here I end this section and I turn my attention to the original discussion. It is unfortunate that first in addressing this matter too I am forced to lament the dishonesty of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib. If the aforementioned [Khan Sahib], in quoting the passages of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* and in explaining its meaning, did not commit the act of deceit, I would not have needed to adopt such a lengthy answer in reply to him.

In *al-Barahin al-Qat'iah*, neither was the discussion on the expanse of absolute knowledge, nor was the discussion on the superior perfect sciences. Rather, the discussion was only about the expanse of knowledge related to the world. A likeminded partner of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami' Sahib, after proving this expanse in knowledge for Satan and the Angel of Death in [his book] *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah* with proofs, analogised the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) to them, and based on this analogy, he affirmed expansive knowledge of the world for the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). And Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him), the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, refuted this analogy. *Al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* is a reply to *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah*.

Anyhow, the entire discussion in *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* was about expansive knowledge of the world, which has no connection to religion and worship, the obligations of prophethood and messengership, and regarding such sciences, I quoted the statement of Imam al-Razi (Allah have mercy on him) under the sixth introductory principle from his *al-Tafsir al-Kabir* that in these sciences "it is possible that a non-prophet is higher than a prophet."[23]

However, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, with his "revivalist" manipulation, wrote: "He stated clearly in his book *al-Barahin al-Qat'iah*...that their master, Iblis, has more expansive knowledge than the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace)."

It should be considered carefully: where is expanse in only worldly knowledge, and where is expanse in absolute knowledge?

Look at the difference in paths, from where to where?

To make it easy for readers, I will present an illustration, by which the passages from *al-Barahin al-Qat'iah* will become completely clear.

Suppose that another brother of the intellectual partner of the author of *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah*, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, for example, Zayd, says that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) acquired knowledge of poetry, and he presented the proof that many sinners and disbelievers possess knowledge of this craft. Imra' al-Qays was an evil disbeliever, yet he was a sophisticated poet. Al-Firdawsi was a heretical Shiite, yet one of the best Persian poets. Thus, since even sinners and disbelievers have acquired knowledge of this craft, and since the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the best of the Messengers, the chief of the first

[23] Likewise within the eighth introductory principle, with extremely clear evidences, I proved that if in these sciences somebody had more expansive knowledge, he cannot be considered more knowledgeable in absolute terms in relation to another. When someone is called "more knowledgeable" in relation to another that would be said in terms of the perfecting sciences and the totality of knowledge, as was established in the last introductory principles. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

and the last, he must have acquired it. In response to this, someone following the same methodology as Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib says:

> The condition of Imra' al-Qays and al-Firdawsi is known by recurrent historical attestations. Now, to analogise one superior to them, [and conclude] that equivalent or greater [knowledge] than the inferior one is established in him too, is not the job of any sane person of knowledge.
>
> First, the issues of belief are not analogical that by analogy they are established. Rather, they are decisive such that they are established by decisive texts; and even solitary reports are of no use here. Thus, since its establishment will only be worth noticing when decisive, if by affirming it based on a corrupt analogy and against the entire ummah the belief of creation is to be corrupted, how can it be worthy of attention?
>
> Second, the opposite is established in the Qur'an and hadith. In the Qur'an it says: "We have not taught him poetry, nor is it fitting for him." (Qur'an 36:69) It is narrated in the books of hadith that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in his entire lifetime never recited one [full] poem, and in the famous book of Hanafi jurisprudence, *Fatawa Qadi Khan*, it says: "Some scholars have said: Whoever said, 'Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) recited poetry,' has disbelieved."
>
> Third, if this was entailed by superiority, then every pious Muslim should be a better poet than Imra' al-Qays and al-Firdawsi. Based on this analogy, it should be carefully considered, that if by looking at the condition of Imra' al-Qays and al-Firdawsi, without evidence, using merely corrupt analogy, knowledge of poetry is established for the Pride of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), against decisive texts, if it is not heresy then what part of faith is it? The expansive knowledge of poetry of Imra' al-Qays and al-Firdawsi is known by recurrent historical attestations. Which decisive text is there of the expansive knowledge of poetry of the Pride of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace) based on which all texts are rejected and one creed against the Shari'ah is established?[24]

Thereupon, some spiritual offspring of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib gave the fatwa:

> This person in his statement has stated clearly that Imra' al Qays and al-Firdawsi have more knowledge than the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace)...and indeed it says in *Nasim al-Riyad*: "Whoever says, so-and-so is more learned than him (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace), indeed he has faulted him and degraded him, so he is an insulter."[25]

Fair readers should consider: did not this mufti commit deception? Was the abovementioned passage discussing absolute knowledge or the lofty perfecting sciences? Or did the aforementioned person accept expansiveness in absolute knowledge or the

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[24] The abovementioned paragraph is from *al-Barahinal- Qati'ah* itself, reconstructed slightly in order to explain the illustration; otherwise, the form is precisely that of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

[25] The abovementioned quote is the exact same as Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan, but to accord with the illustration, instead of Iblis, the names of Imra' al-Qays and al-Firdawsi were written.

lofty perfecting sciences for Imra' al-Qays and Firdawsi? And did he deny absolute expansive knowledge for the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace)? Or did he deny the sciences pertaining to the messengership and the lofty perfecting sciences for him? It is obvious that no such [statements] are found here. Rather, here only the science of poetry is being discussed. Based on the acceptance of its expanse for a disbeliever like Imra' al-Qays, al-Firdawsi and others, and its negation from the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), drawing the conclusion that the aforementioned person accepted a disbeliever like Imra' al-Qays and a deviant like al-Firdawsi as having more extensive knowledge than the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is the handiwork of an imposter and a schemer who in order to justify his own inanity creates discord amongst the Muslims, or is the work of an ignoramus and idiot who does not even understand the meaning of "more knowledgeable" and "more expansive knowledge." In the ten introductory principles, I have established that one will be more knowledgeable with respect to another in terms of the lofty perfecting sciences and the totality of knowledge; otherwise it would entail that it is correct to say that a cobbler, and a driver, rather filth-eating insects are more knowledgeable than Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib. The details of this have passed in the eighth and tenth principles.

Although for people of understanding, this much is enough, but such unfortunate groups existed in the past who were extremely ignorant, and then after that even the 'ulama were not less in ignorance than them, but more. Because of this, I will present one more example for further clarity:

Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib told a tale of a strange and wonderful owl:

Khan Sahib said:

> Three people were on their way. From far away, they saw a gathering of many people in a jungle. A chief was sitting on a saddle. His courtiers were present. One vile woman was dancing. A candle was alight. One person [from them] was very experienced in archery. They told each other that this gathering of sin and wickedness should be overturned – so what plan should they execute [i.e. what should the archer target]? One said to kill the chief because he was responsible for everything; a second suggested killing the dancing woman; the third said, don't kill this one either, because she did not come of her own accord, but came under instructions from the chief, and as the aim was to overturn the gathering, the candle should be extinguished. This opinion was chosen. He aimed above the candle and shot the arrow. The candle was extinguished. Now, neither the chief remained, nor the vile woman, nor the gathering. They were extremely surprised. They stayed for the rest of the night. When it was morning, they saw a dead owl with the arrow in its beak; so it was understood that all this work was done by the soul of that owl.[26]

Now, suppose that a disciple of Khan Sahib, 'Alim al-Din, who believes Khan Sahib is a hadith-scholar, exegete, jurist, Sufi, Hafiz and reciter, but says that A'la Hazrat [a title used by his followers for Ahmad Rida Khan] was not skilled in Mesmerism. Another

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[26] Khan Sahib related this story when explaining the reality of Mesmerism. See *Malfuzat*, Part Four, Hasani Press, Bareli. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

disciple, Hafiz al-Din, said that A'la Hazrat did have experience in Mesmerism, and the proof he presented is:

> From the abovementioned *Malfuz* of A'la Hazrat, it is known that an owl was so adept at Mesmerism that with one glance he displayed an extraordinary dramatic display, while our A'la Hazrat, the reviver of religion, who is a great and accepted slave of the Lord was certainly thousands, nay millions, of times superior to that owl, so why should he not possess it?

Upon this, 'Alim al-Din says that the owl's expertise in Mesmerism is known from the *Malfuz Sharif* of A'la Hazrat, but where is A'la Hazrat's expertise in Mesmerism established? And analogising an owl to A'la Hazrat is a corrupt analogy.

Then has a disciple or inheritor of Khan Sahib conveyed the truth in propagating that 'Alim al-Din lessened the knowledge of A'la Hazrat and said that an owl has more extensive knowledge than A'la Hazrat, the great blessing, the reviver of religion, Allah Almighty bless his beloved and him and send peace[27]? I understand that the one who thinks and says this is foolish, and if in order to expel the poor 'Alim al-Din from the Rida Khani brethren, with full knowledge, this propaganda is deviously made against him, it would be the highest level of deceit and deception.

Anyhow, Khan Sahib's first deception was that:

Al-Barahin al-Qati'ah discussed the expanse of one particular science, that is, knowledge regarding the world, which the likeminded brother of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami' Sahib, after proving for Satan and the Angel of Death with evidences, affirmed for the Prophet, the Joy of World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), based on the analogy of his superiority, and the author of *al-Barahin* refuted this analogy. Furthermore, in his expressions, such words are present that specify the discussion to knowledge of the world. For example, on page 47 of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, the page from which Khan Sahib quoted, these words are found at its beginning:

> In sum, it should be carefully considered, that by looking at the condition of Satan and the Angel of Death, to affirm encompassing knowledge of the world for the Pride of the World against decisive texts without any proofs besides corrupt analogy, <u>if not *shirk* then which part of faith is it?</u>

In this sentence, "encompassing knowledge of the world" is present, after which no doubt remains. However, Khan Sahib's dishonesty can be understood from the fact that in *Husam al-Haramayn*, he quotes the last underlined part of this sentence, and omits the first part where encompassing knowledge of the world is clearly mentioned. Despite this, such titles as "reviver of the current century," "defender of the pure faith" etc. etc. are given to him.

Furthermore, here, another deception of the same kind is noticed. Exactly two lines before the passage which Khan Sahib quoted on that page, the sentence beings as follows:

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[27] This is what Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's disciples and followers say. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

> Thus, because of the position of the blessed soul (upon him peace) in the highest ‛Illiyyin, and his superiority to the Angel of Death, it can never be established that his knowledge <u>in these matters</u> are equal to the Angel of Death, or in excess to him.

In this passage too, the phrase "these matters" clearly explains that the discussion is only about knowledge regarding the world, not knowledge in general, nor the lofty perfecting sciences on which human virtue depends. But Khan Sahib also clearly omitted this sentence.

Anyhow, despite all these clear statements from *al-Barahin al-Qati‛ah*, by which it is clearly understood that here the discussion is only about encompassing knowledge of the world and not absolute knowledge, without any reservation, Khan Sahib writes:

> He stated clearly in his book *al-Barahin al-Qat‛iah*...that their master, Iblis, has more expansive knowledge than the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace).

Thus far, an explanation of Khan Sahib's first deception [was presented], and simultaneously, the first objection of the aforementioned [Khan Sahib] was satisfactorily answered, after which no room [for doubt] remains for an unbiased person, rather even for a biased and fanatical person. So all praise is due to Allah!

The upshot of the answer is that in *al-Barahin al-Qati‛ah*, based on those evidences which Mawlawi ‛Abd al-Sami‛ Sahib, the author of *al-Anwar al-Sati‛ah* presented, only expansive knowledge of the world is conceded for Satan and the Angel of Death, and it states that this expanse in knowledge is not established by text for the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Interpreting this as rejecting expansiveness of absolute knowledge, and concluding (Allah forbid!) that he said the Messenger of Allah's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) noble knowledge is less than Satan's, is only the work of an ignorant and foolish person who restricts the lofty knowledge of the Holy Prophet (Allah bless hum and grant him peace) to the lower world. But for the person who believes that his knowledge is higher than the Throne and the Footstool, how can he commit such foolery?

If today some person said that in the science of architecture, the knowledge possessed by some English or European person, is more expansive than Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah (Allah have mercy on him), no person stupider than a stupid person will say that this person has said Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifah's (Allah have mercy on him) knowledge is less than the disbelieving Englishman. Likewise if some person says that such-and-such a drunkard has a lot of knowledge pertaining to wine, and such-and-such a Ghawth or Qutb has not acquired this knowledge, it will never be understood from this that the person believes the drunkard to be more knowledgeable than the Ghawth or Qutb.

The truth is that in order to misguide people, the means that the Satan required were all granted to him by the Real Almighty, in order to test humanity. He gave him life till Resurrection. He gave him such strange and extraordinary powers that he is able to travel in man's vessels just like blood. And the knowledge that is needed to misguide the slaves were all given to him, so that he can accomplish his deceptive efforts and the world realises how useless all his weapons are against the Slaves of the Most Merciful.

The needs for his [mission] are such, that in order to misguide the sons of Adam, he has awareness of their passions and desires. He should know that in such-and-such a place there is a young woman alone and such-and-such a wandering youth can reach there with a certain plan; and in such-and-such a place there is dance session and adolescent youths are gathered in a certain place and with a particular scheme he can bring those youths to that gathering of lust. Anyhow, to complete those satanic affairs he needs expansive knowledge of the lower world. But what purpose do those close to the Divine Court have in these futile matters? Their work is instruction and guidance, and those pure sciences which are needed for this were given to them in abundance by the Real Almighty.

Thus, even if Satan has acquired some knowledge of the lower world, and the revered prophets did not acquire it, which idiot and which follower of Satan will say that merely because of these lower sciences, Satan is more knowledgeable than the Messenger of the Lord (Allah bless him and grant him peace) or any other prophet, although from the divine sciences and the lordly disciplines they have attained a large share which no close angel has achieved?

Within the introductory principles I have shed more than enough light on this subject. Now, here I will present only one further matter, and with that, if Allah wills, this [part of the] discussion will end. I have no expectation of the friendship of enemies. Yes, those who Allah has given the ability to love truth, I certainly hope from them that they will accept the truth.

The Powerful Testimony of Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami' and Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib in Absolving Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him)

The decision of the accuser in my favour is better

As Zulaykha declared the innocence of the Moon of Canaan[28]

From our previous discussion it was clear that the only crime committed by the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* was that, based on the proofs which Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami' presented in *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah*, he accepted the expanse of one particular science, meaning, knowledge of the world, for Satan and the Angel of Death, and he said this expanse was not established by text for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace). But:

Such a crime this is that those of your city commit it!

Shortly after this discussion, these words of *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah* are noticed:

> The supporters of the gathering of Milad do not claim that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is present in all pure and impure, religious and irreligious, gatherings. The presence of the Angel of Death and Iblis is found in even more places than him, of purity and impurity, disbelief and belief.

Look! Even Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib did not write with this much clarity. He [i.e. Mawlana Khalil Ahmad] expressed only knowledge of the world as the specific expanse which was not documented in the texts. This likeminded brother of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida

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[28] Meaning, the Prophet Yusuf (peace be upon him).

Khan Sahib, Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami‘ Sahib, clearly says that the presence of the Angel of Death and Satan is not only more than the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), but is found in more places. The abovementioned sentence of *al-Anwar al-Sati‘ah* was in its first edition which was printed together with *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*; and also in the edition which was revised and renovated by Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami and thereafter published, and upon which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib wrote around 4 pages of commendation in which he lavishly praised Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami Sahib and his *al-Anwar al-Sati‘ah*. Therefore, Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's successors and followers should answer:

1) Is Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami‘ a disbeliever because of this passage or not?
2) And where does Khan Sahib himself stand because of writing a commendation on it?

May Allah Almighty give me and you the faculty of insight. Do you see the miracle of the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*, Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him)? Khan Sahib himself was caught up in the very accusation he threw at him.

I will now close this discussion, and I think it is appropriate as a conclusion to the discussion that I quote the statement of the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah* (Allah have mercy on him) from *al-Tasdiqat li Daf‘ al-Talbisat* [also known as *al-Muhannad ‘ala al-Mufannad*] in which he answered this Satanic slander.

When Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib took the result of his labour and efforts, the fatwa of disbelief, to the two noble Harams, and he solicited endorsements from the noble scholars there who were unaware of the reality of the situation by deceiving them, and this began to be discussed even in the two noble Harams, some of the people of knowledge sent 26 questions pertaining to beliefs to the revered scholars of Deoaband and Saharanpur. The answers to these questions were given by Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib, the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*. And then the sum [of these questions and answers], for the purpose of endorsement and confirmation, were sent to the two noble Harams, Levant, Damascus, Halab, Egypt etc. to the noble scholars of these lands of Islam; and these noble scholars and great muftis endorsed it and declared it sound. Then those answers along with the endorsements were printed. Its first edition with translation was printed as *al-Tasdiqat li Daf‘ al-Talbisat* (Endorsements to Repel Distortions). Then after that, many editions of it were released.

The nineteenth answer is related to this Satanic slander of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib. In the following, I will quote the exact question and its answer. Readers will notice that those things I wrote in this discussion are in fact an elaboration of this brief reply which the author of *Barahin* himself gave during his lifetime:

> **Question Nineteen**
>
> Do you believe that Iblis, the accursed, is more knowledgeable than the Chief Existent (upon him be peace) and has more expansive knowledge than him in absolute terms? Have you written this in a book? And how do you judge one who believes this?
>
> **Answer**:

A review of this issue preceded from us, that the Prophet (upon him be peace) is the most knowledgeable of creation in general, of the sciences, the judgement, the secrets and other than that from the Kingdom of the Horizons, and we believe with certainty that one who says that so-and-so person is more knowledgeable than the Prophet (upon him be peace) has disbelieved. Our elders have given the verdict of disbelief for one who says that Iblis, the accursed, is more knowledgeable than the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), so how is it possible that this matter is in a certain book we authored?

However, the concealment of some insignificant particular things from the Prophet (upon him be peace) due to his inattention to it does not cause any defect in his (upon him be peace) position as the most learned, once it is established that he is the most knowledgeable of creation in the noble sciences that are fitting to his lofty station, just as cognizance of most of those insignificant things due to the intensity of Iblis's attention to them does not cause glory and perfection of knowledge in him, since this is not the criterion of virtue. Hereof, it is not correct to say that Iblis is more knowledgeable than the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) just as it is not correct to say about a child who knows some particulars that he is more knowledgeable than an erudite research scholar in the sciences from whom those particulars are hidden. We have recited unto you the story of Hudhud with Sulayman (upon our Prophet and upon him be peace) and his statement, "I comprehend that which you do not comprehend." (Qur'an 27:22) The records of hadith and the books of exegesis are replete with abundant examples of this which are well-known amongst people[29].

The physicians are agreed that Plato and Galen and their likes are from the most knowledgeable of physicians about the qualities of diseases and their states, despite their knowledge that maggots are more knowledgeable about states of filth, their taste and their qualities. Hence, the absence of Plato's and Galen's knowledge of these despicable states does not harm their being the most learned, and none from the intelligent and the stupid will be satisfied with the view that maggots are more knowledgeable than Plato, although they have more extensive knowledge than Plato about the states of filth. The innovators of our lands affirm for the blessed prophetic soul (upon it a million greetings and peace) all the sciences of the base lowly things and the lofty virtuous things, saying that since he (upon him be peace) was the best of all creation, it is necessary that he possesses all of those sciences, every particular and every universal. We rejected the establishment of this matter using this corrupt analogy without a proof-text from the relied upon texts. Do you not see that every believer is more virtuous and more honourable than Iblis so following this logic it would be necessary that every person from the individuals of this *ummah* possesses the sciences of Iblis, and it would be necessary that Sulayman (upon our Prophet and upon him be peace) knew that which Hudhud knew, and that Plato and Galen knew all the knowledge of maggots? These concomitants are absurd in their entirety as is obvious.

This is a summary of what we said in *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* in order to sever the veins of the foolish deviants and break the necks of the forging deceivers. Hence, our discussion about it was only in regards to some of these temporal particulars, and for this reason we used the demonstrative noun to indicate that the objective in affirmation and negation there was those particulars, and nothing besides [them]. However, the iniquitous distort the speech and do not fear the reckoning

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[29] In the ninth introductory principle, I presented five verses with the statements of the exegetes and fifteen hadiths on this matter. (Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani)

> of the Knowing King. We are certain that those who say that so-and-so individual is more knowledgeable than the Prophet (upon him be peace) is a disbeliever, as more than one of our respected 'ulama stated. And whoever concocts about us that which we did not say, upon him is [the burden of] proof, [and he should] fear the interrogation before the Recompensing King. Allah is witness over what we say.

For Allah's sake, be fair! After this reply of the author of *Barahin* himself, is there any room left for this slander? No, by Allah! Judgement will be on the Day of Judgement.

Reply to Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's Second Objection to *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*

The second substantial objection of Khan Sahib Barelwi to the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him), was that he accepted encompassing knowledge for Satan and labelled its affirmation for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) *shirk*, whereas anything which is *shirk* when affirmed for any single creature is also *shirk* when affirmed for any other creature, so it is as though the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* accepts Satan as a partner of the Lord – Glory be to Allah and by His praise!

If the respected readers carefully considered [this allegation], it would be realised that this objection is more mistaken and more unfounded than the first, and its reality is as far as Khan Sahib's fatwas are from honesty and integrity.

The actual truth is that in *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, the affirmation of intrinsic knowledge for the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was regarded as *shirk* and, based on those proofs which the likeminded brother of Khan Sahib, Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami', presented in *al-Anwar al-Sati'a*, he accepted only granted knowledge for Satan. The affirmation of intrinsic knowledge necessitates *shirk* as proven from Khan Sahib's own statements, quoted in the first introductory principle.

In *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, such statements are found in different places from which it is clearly understood that only granted knowledge is conceded for Satan, and *shirk* was determined for intrinsic knowledge, which Khan Sahib himself does not dispute. However, it is unfortunate that based on his "revivalist integrity," ignoring all these statements from *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, he wrote explicitly about the author of *Barahin*:

> He believes in encompassing earthly knowledge for Iblis, and when the mention of Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace), comes, he says, "This is *shirk*." *Shirk* is only to affirm a partner for Allah Almighty, so when affirming something for any of creation is *shirk*, it will definitely be *shirk* for all creation, since it is not possible for anyone to be a partner of Allah Almighty.

I completely agree with this principle of Khan Sahib, that whatever is *shirk* to affirm for any creation will certainly be *shirk* when affirmed for any other being in this world. However, although I completely agree with this principle of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, applying it to the author of *Barahin* is from the particular act of Khan Sahib which is called deception or distortion. Apart from the difference between intrinsic and granted knowledge, here, Khan Sahib openly slandered the author of *Barahin* saying that he accepted "encompassing knowledge" for Satan, but this is such a lie that there is no

trace of truth in it[30]. But it is unfortunate that in the Rida Khani group no truthful and upright person comes to mind who will accept this revolting action of his leader as an unintentional error, let alone deliberate deception.

The reality is that the likeminded brother of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami‘ Sahib, in proving expansive knowledge for Satan in *al-Anwar al-Sati‘ah*, wrote:

> In *al-Durr al-Mukhtar* in the section of Salah it is written that Satan stays with the sons of Adam in the day and his children stays with the offspring of Adam in the night. ‘Allamah al-Shami wrote in its commentary that Satan stays with all the children of Adam except those whom Allah saves. After this he wrote: "Allah gave him power over that just as He gave the Angel of Death a power similar to that."

Thus, whatever knowledge Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami Sahib established for Satan from this evidence, it was certainly accepted by Mawlana Khalil Sahib. If this is what Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib understands as encompassing knowledge of the world, this is his academic ability which will be judged by the people of knowledge. Otherwise, where is Satan staying with people, and where is [complete] encompassing knowledge of the world for which atom-by-atom, drop-by-drop, leaf-by-leaf knowledge is required?

And if the mind of Khan Sahib accepts this as encompassing knowledge, even then, the first to believe in it, rather, the first to call others to believe in it, is the likeminded brother of Khan Sahib, Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami Sahib, and the first to exemplify the fatwa of disbelief and *shirk* is him, because it was he who proved this expanse in knowledge for Satan with proofs, and Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) only said "we accept." Anyhow, here Khan Sahib slandered the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah* falsely that he believed in encompassing knowledge of the world for Iblis.

The second deception was that in *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*, based on those evidences which Mawlawi ‘Abd al-Sami Sahib presented, only granted knowledge was accepted for Satan; and he labelled intrinsic knowledge for the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), *shirk*. Khan Sahib had certainly seen this strong distinction made between intrinsic and granted [knowledge]. Now I will present evidence for both these matters, that granted knowledge was conceded [for Satan and the Angel of Death], and *shirk* was determined for intrinsic knowledge.

Proving the first matter

In this discussion of *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*, on the fortieth line of page 50, it says: "The extent of the expanse of knowledge given to Satan..." Then four lines after that, it says: "And Satan and the Angel of Death who were given this expanse in knowledge..." There is clarity in these two sentences that the knowledge which was conceded for Satan was [knowledge] granted by the Lord.

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30 When the phrase "encompassing knowledge of the world" is mentioned in *al-Barahin al-Qati‘ah*, it is addressing the knowledge which is wrongly affirmed for the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) based on the invalid analogy with Satan and the Angel of Death, not the knowledge that is conceded for the latter. The knowledge that is conceded for the latter is what is described in the work being refuted, *al-Anwar al-Sati‘ah*, quoted in the next paragraph above. Hence, the deception in Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan's comment, "He believes in encompassing earthly knowledge for Iblis," which Mawlana Manzur Nu‘mani is highlighting here.

Proving the Second Matter

First it should be understood that the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah,* in this discussion, refutes the logic that, since Satan and the Angel of Death have acquired this expanse in knowledge, therefore, because of the superiority of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), more knowledge of the world than this self-generated in him. It is this assumption that the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* called *shirk*.

In the first line of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* from where this discussion begins, it says:

> The entire ummah has the belief that the quantity of knowledge which the Real Almighty favoured and taught the Respected Pride of the World (upon him peace) and all creation, affirming even one iota of more knowledge is *shirk*. This is derived from all books of the Shari'ah.

It is known from this text that the opinion of the author of *Barahin* is that it is only *shirk* to affirm such knowledge for creation that is not given by the Lord, and the name of this is "intrinsic knowledge." Then in the same discussion, shortly afterwards, he said:

> The belief of the Ahl al-Sunnah is that no attribute of the Real Almighty will be found in the slave, and the shadow of His attributes which He bestows on anyone, nothing more than that is ever possible for anyone...Furthermore, whoever was given whatever quantity of knowledge, he cannot increase it by the weight of an atom. The extent which Satan and the Angel of Death have, to increase on it is not in their ability at all.

Then he said:

> The quantity of the knowledge of unveiling which was acquired by Hazrat Khidr (upon him peace), he is not able to increase on it; and Hazrat Musa (upon him peace) despite being superior, did not acquire it, so he is the same as Hazrat Khidr, his inferior, in his inability to generate knowledge of unveiling.

Meaning, the understanding that any superior person, due only to his superiority, can gain an increase in an attribute of perfection over an inferior person without the bestowal of the Lord, is incorrect. Rather, whoever has received whatever [amount of] knowledge etc., he receives it from Allah Almighty. After proving this statement, the author of *Barahin* says [with Mawlana Manzur Nu'mani's commentary in parenthesis]:

> The upshot is, it should be considered, that upon seeing the condition of Satan and the Angel of Death (meaning, seeing that they have acquired knowledge of the places of the world as is understood from the evidences of Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami' Sahib), to affirm encompassing knowledge of the world (i.e. intrinsic knowledge) for the Pride of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace) against decisive texts, without evidence, and purely from corrupt analogy (meaning, based on the logic that since the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is superior to Satan and Angel of Death, due to his superiority, all knowledge of the world will self-generate in him), if it is not *shirk* then what part of faith is it?
>
> This expanse for Satan and the Angel of Death (meaning, with Allah's command having knowledge of many places of the world) is proven by text (meaning, those

> texts with Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sam Sahib presented); the expansive knowledge of the Pride of the World (meaning, intrinsic knowledge because by corrupt analogy and pure reason only that is established, and this is understood from the context of Hazrat Mawlana's discussion), which decisive text is there due to which all texts are rejected and one *shirk* is established?

From this last sentence it is also known that the deceased Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib is discussing the expanse in knowledge that to establish is *shirk*, and it was stated in the first line that *shirk* is only affirming intrinsic knowledge which was not acquired by Divine bestowal.

The end result is that the sections before and after the passage in question clearly shows that the author of *Barahin* is speaking only about the expanse of intrinsic knowledge, and this is what he termed *shirk*.

Thus far, I proved my claim through indications of the context, and although these indications are not less than clear and explicit statements, I will nonetheless now present a clearer statement from the author of *Barahin* in which, with complete clarity, he explains that his discussion is only about intrinsic knowledge and not granted knowledge. In this very discussion, several sentences after the sentence quoted by Khan Sahib, this passage is found:

> This discussion is about establishing such knowledge for him intrinsically, as is the belief of the ignorant. If he believes that by Allah's disclosure he makes him present, it will not be *shirk*, but without proof of Shari'ah, having belief in it is incorrect.

Look carefully, how the author of *Barahin* clearly explained that the ruling of *shirk* is only in the situation where any person affirms intrinsic knowledge for him. And in the first introductory principle, I quoted the references of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah* and *Khalis al-I'tiqad* from the statements of Khan Sahib himself that whoever affirms any share of intrinsic knowledge, even if less than less than an atom for any besides Allah, he has committed *shirk*.

Thus, Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) has no such crime in which Khan Sahib does not have an equal share. And assuming this clear statement was not in *Barahin* and these indications were not there from the context, which has forced us to accept the intent as intrinsic knowledge, still it would never have been permissible in any way for Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib to take the intent of expansive granted knowledge in this place. In *Khalis al-I'tiqad*, on page 28, as a general principle, he wrote:

> In the verses, hadiths and statements of 'ulama in which are condemnation of affirming knowledge of unseen for others, definitely these two types (intrinsic or encompassing knowledge) are intended.

Thus in *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, the knowledge to affirm which is labelled *shirk* is more worthy of being understood as intrinsic or completely encompassing knowledge. But it is unfortunate that for the desire of *takfir*, he forgot his own written principles. It is true that:

Your love for something blinds and deafens.

Thus far, Khan Sahib's second objection was answered, the upshot of which is that, he criticised [*al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*] for describing as *shirk* the very knowledge that was affirmed for Satan; whereas, the reality is contrary to this, as granted knowledge was conceded for Satan and *shirk* was applied to affirmation of intrinsic knowledge – and far indeed is [the distance] between them.

Reply to Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's Third Objection to *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*

The third objection of Khan Sahib Barelwi to the author of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*, Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him), was that:

> He demands for the knowledge of Muhammad (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) a decisive text, and he will not be satisfied with it until it is decisive (*qat'i*), and when he comes to negating his (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) knowledge, in this explanation on page 46, six lines before this disgraceful [statement of] disbelief, he himself adheres to a baseless hadith.

Regarding the grading of the narration, I will if Allah wills, explain it in the answer to the fourth objection. Here I only wish to answer Khan Sahib's academic fallacy that "he demands for affirmation a decisive text and for negation he presents one narration."

If only, before presenting this objection, Khan Sahib first carefully considered [the question]: did the author of *Barahin*, here, present those hadiths as a claimant and one producing evidence, or as an objector and opponent? And if only, he also researched the difference between these two functions in the principles of debate.

The reality is that the author of *Barahin* (Allah have mercy on him) demanded a decisive text for affirmation and in opposition to the analogy of Mawlawi 'Abd al-Sami Sahib, the author of *al-Anwar al-Sati'ah*, he presented only hadiths, and both these things are valid. For establishing belief, a decisive text is undoubtedly necessary. Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself accepts this in principle (see *Inba' al-Mustafa*). And undoubtedly, in opposition to analogy, let alone hadiths, another analogy can be produced (see *Munazarah Rashidiyyah* and its commentaries).

Reply to Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib's Fourth Objection to *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah*

The fourth objection was that the author of *Barahin* was deceptive in quoting, and the narration which Hazrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Muhaddith Dihlawi (Allah have mercy on him) refuted after quoting, was quoted [by Mawlana Khalil Ahmad] while attributing it to him, and there was no mention of the refutation; so it is as though he selectively quoted "don't approach Salah" [from the Qur'an] and omitted "while you are drunk."

I ask the [spiritual] descendents of Khan Sahib to forgive me, as I am forced to say here that since this act is ordinary for him, this is why he projects this onto others, but he should know that such tactics are only required for the people of falsehood. Truth seekers have no need for it. However, since this objection of Khan Sahib is not related to the subject of *takfir*, I will be brief in my reply.

Firstly take note of what the words used by the author of *Barahin* were. On page 51 on the seventh line he wrote:

> And Shaykh 'Abd al-Haq narrates that: "I do not even have knowledge of what is behind a wall."

Here the author of *Barahin* did not give the name of any particular book of the Shaykh. So if this narration is mentioned in any book of the Shaykh without criticism and refutation then the reference of the author of *Barahin* will be absolutely correct, and it will be understood that he quoted from there. Now take note of the last hadith of *al-Fasl al-Thalith* of *Mishkat al-Masabih*, *Bab Sifat al-Salah*:

> Narrated from Abu Hurayrah: He said: The Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) prayed Zuhr with us, and in the last rows was a man who ruined [his] prayer. When he did *salam*, the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) called him and said: "O So-and-So! Do you not fear Allah? Do you not see how you pray? You think that something you do is hidden from me. By Allah! Indeed I see from behind me [in Salah] as I see in front of me. (Ahmad narrated it)

Hazrat Shaykh 'Abd al-Haqq Dihlawi (Allah have mercy on him) while commenting on this hadith on page 392 of *Ashi'at al-Lam'at* wrote:

> Know that the Messenger's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) vision from behind - as it was in front - was in the form of breaking the norm (*kharq al-'adah*), by means of revelation or inspiration, and was [only] sometimes, and was not permanent. This is supported by the hadith that when the blessed camel of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was lost, he did not know its whereabouts. So the hypocrites said: "Muhammad says that I receive news from the heavens, and he has no news of the whereabouts of his camel!" Then the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "By Allah! I know not but what my Lord has taught me. Now, my Lord has taught me that it is in such-and-such a place, and its rein is tied to the branch of a tree." Also the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said: "I am a man. I do not know what is behind this wall," meaning, without being taught by the Real, Glorified is He. (*Ashi'at al-Lam'at*, 1:392)

Here, the Shaykh quoted the narration and did not mention any criticism of it. Therefore, the reference of Hazrat Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) is absolutely correct. In fact if considered carefully, from this statement of the Shaykh, it is known that the narration is worthy of consideration according to him because here the Shaykh presented it to support his claim, and it is far removed from the Shaykh's trustworthiness that he presents a narration as proof for his claim which he believes to be completely baseless. Thus his quotation of this narration in the context of proof is clear proof that it is reliable according to him. [The question] remains that the Shaykh in one section of *Madarij al-Nubuwwah* said regarding this narration that "it is baseless." Although answering this question is not in our responsibility, in order to remove confusion from the readers, I will say something briefly about this.

The reality is that the well-known careful and strict hadith-scholar Hafiz Ibn al-Jawzi quoted this narration without chain in some of his books, and he is such a careful, critical and insightful hadith master, that his quotation of a narration without criticism is sufficient evidence of its consideration. Because of this, Shaykh (Allah have mercy on him) believed the narration to be reliable, and in the abovementioned passage of *Ashi'at*

al-Lamat presented it as support for his claim. But because no chain has been transmitted for this narration, this is why in one place of *Madarij al-Nubuwwah*, he said, "it is baseless," meaning, it has no chain. By this, the contradiction in the Shaykh's speech is repelled, and no doubt remains. And it is a strange coincidence that in the speech of Hafiz Ibn Hajar al-'Asqalani regarding this very narration, there is apparent contradiction. Thus, al-Qastallani in *al-Mawahib al-Ladunniyyah* quotes from al-Sakhawi's (Allah have mercy on him) *al-Maqasid al-Hasanah*:

> The hadith, "I do not know what is behind this wall of mine," our teacher, Shaykh al-Islam, Ibn Hajar said: "It has no basis." However, he said in *Talkhis Takhrij Ahadith al-Rafi'i* upon his [i.e. al-Rafi'i's] statement in *al-Khasa'is*, "And he sees from behind his back as he sees from his front":
>
> "It is in the two *Sahih*s and others from the hadith of Anas and others; and the hadiths transmitted with this [meaning] are restricted to the condition of Salah, and by this it can be reconciled with his (upon him peace) statement: 'I do not know what is behind this wall of mine.'" End. This indicates it is transmitted.

'Allamah al-Zurqani, after quoting this passage of Hafiz al-Sakhawi (Allah have mercy on him), said in *Sharh al-Mawahib*:

> In his statement, "It has no basis" is a contradiction from him. It is possible that his intent is that it has no basis that is taken into consideration, as it was cited without chain, not that his intent is it is false.

Thus, the explanation that I gave for the statement of the Shaykh (Allah have mercy on him) from *Madarij* is exactly how 'Allamah al-Zurqani explained [the apparent contradiction in] the speech of Hafiz Ibn Hajar.

All that was presented regarding the explanation of the statement of the Shaykh "it is baseless" was beyond my obligation. It was only in my responsibility to find in any book of the Shaykh a quotation of this narration without criticism. This was a voluntary kindness that based on the action of the Shaykh I showed that it was reliable according to him, and I lifted the apparent contradiction between his two statements. So all praise and thanks is due to Allah!

And ignoring all those things, there is no doubt that the narration is true in its meaning, and many authentic hadiths support its content. For example, in the two *Sahih*s and *Sunan al-Nasa'i*, it is narrated from Zaynab, the wife of Ibn Mas'ud (Allah be pleased with them), that in order to ask a question she wanted to ask regarding Zakat, she came to the door of the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and when she reached there, another Ansari wife was standing there with the same need. Then Hazrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) came to them and she said to him: "Go to the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and inform him that two women are at the door asking you: 'Is charity permissible on their behalf for their husbands and for the orphans in their care,' and don't inform him who we are." So Bilal asked him, and the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) said to him "Who are they?" he said: "A woman from the Ansar and Zaynab." He said to him "Which Zaynab?" He said: "The wife of 'Abd Allah [ibn Mas'ud]." He said: "For them are two rewards: the reward of [maintaining good] relations, and the reward of charity."

Thus, if the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) knew all matters behind a wall, what was the need for him to ask Hazrat Bilal (Allah be pleased with him) about the names? Then, after inquiring about their names and knowing that it is Zaynab, he asked "which Zaynab?" This is clear proof that he did not know some matters behind a wall.

Furthermore, in the last days of his pure life in the state of illness, in order to see his congregation, the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) went to the door of his blessed chamber, and opening the curtain, he saw those praying in congregation in the Prophetic Mosque - which is mentioned in the authentic books. Specifically during the final days he repeatedly asked: "Are the people praying?" Yet between the blessed mosque and the noble chamber was only one wall. This is clear proof that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not know some matters behind a wall. Thus, if it is narrated in any hadith, "By Allah, I do not know what is behind this wall of mine" or as he (upon him blessing and peace) said, what is so farfetched and repulsive about it? Rather, nobody can dare deny the correctness of the meaning of this narration.

Furthermore, if those matters too are ignored, every fair person will accept that the author of *Barahin* presented this narration in the context of negating intrinsic knowledge, because we have established from the statements of the author of *Barahin* himself that his entire discussion was pertaining to intrinsic knowledge, so he understood this narration as negation of intrinsic knowledge; and we have established from the statements of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself that he too does not profess intrinsic knowledge [for anyone besides Allah], rather whoever affirms even one atom of intrinsic knowledge for any person besides Allah or even less than less than that, he is according to him a disbeliever and polytheist. Based on this, this narration is correct in its meaning according to Khan Sahib too, and he himself has stated: "In the verses, hadiths and statements of 'ulama in which are condemnation of affirming knowledge of unseen for others, definitely these two types (intrinsic or encompassing knowledge) are intended." (*Khalis al-I'tiqad*, p. 28)

Thus, since Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Sahib (Allah have mercy on him) understood this as negating intrinsic knowledge, what room for objection does Khan Sahib or his [intellectual] descendents have?

I have said from the start that this discussion is unrelated to the topic of *takfir*. This is why I will suffice with this much.

Now the inquiry into the passages of *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* is complete, and I have finished answering with Allah's help all of the four objections of Khan Sahib. Now I will begin the final inquiry into *Husam al-Haramaym* regarding the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*.

The Slander against Hakim al-Ummah Hazrat Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him) of Lessening the Station of the Master of the Prophets (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and its Reply

With regards to Hakim al-Ummah Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Sahib Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him), Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib Barelwi wrote on pages 20-1 of *Husam al-Haramayn*:

> From the seniors of these Satanic Wahhabis is another man from the scions of Gangohi called Ashraf 'Ali al-Thanawi. He compiled a small treatise that does not reach four pages and stated clearly therein that the equivalent of the Messenger of Allah's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) knowledge of the unseen has been acquired by every child and every madman, rather every animal and every beast. These are his accursed words:
>
> "If the assessment of the knowledge of unseen for the holy essence of the prophet is valid as said by Zayd, it will be asked: What did he intend by this – is it part of the unseen or all of it? If he intended part, what speciality is there in this for the Revered Messenger, for indeed the equivalent of this knowledge of unseen has been acquired by Zayd and 'Amr, rather every child and madman, rather all animals and beasts; and if he intended all whereby no part is excluded, its invalidity is established by transmission and reason."
>
> I say: Look at the effects of the seal of Allah Almighty – how he equates [the knowledge of] the Messenger of Allah (Allah Almighty bless him and grant him peace) and [the knowledge of] such-and-such and such-and-such!

Here, I cannot give any answer to those ghastly and disgusting words which Khan Sahib used with respect to Hazrat Hakim al-Ummah. Its word-for-word retort can be given by those vulgar people who have also reached the status of "revivers" in the art of swearing. I am completely free of and helpless in this craft. The Wise Qur'an states: "Tell My servants that they should speak that which is best. Surely, Satan creates discord among them. Indeed, Satan is an open enemy to mankind." (17:53) In another place, He addressed the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) himself: "Repel evil with that which is best." (23:96) Thus, according to this Qur'anic imperative, in reply to these swears of Khan Sahib, I will only offer [this plea] to the Real Almighty: O My Lord! Khan Sahib has passed on from this world. Now save his successors from this evil practice which is a shame and humiliation in this world and deprivation and loss in the afterlife.

After this, I turn to the original discussion, and Allah guides to the path of rightness. It seems that when writing *Husam al-Haramayn*, Khan Sahib took an oath that he will not be truthful and honest in any act. Ponder: Where is the original passage of *Hifz al-Iman* and its real and true meaning, and where is the accursed content in Khan Sahib's writing – that in the unseen matters the equal of that knowledge which is possessed by Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is possessed by every child and madman, nay every animal and every beast (Allah forbid!)? If before broadcasting his decision of disbelief, Khan Sahib quoted the entire text of *Hifz al-Iman* without

mutilation, readers would have known the truth for themselves, and I would not have needed to lift my pen to give a response.

Hifz al-Iman is a short treatise by Hakim al-Ummah (may his blessings last)[31] in which are three discussions. The third inquiry is: "Is calling the Prophet, the Joy of the World, Allah bless him and grant him peace, 'knower of the *ghayb'* correct or not?" It is clear that the discussion of Mawlana was not regarding whether or not the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) had knowledge of the *ghayb*, and if so, how much? Rather, here, Mawlana only wanted to establish that it cannot be said that the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is "knower of the *ghayb*." And between the two matters is a big difference. The reality that an attribute belongs to an essence does not entail that it is allowed to unqualifiedly use it for that person. In the Noble Qur'an, Allah is described as "the Creator of all things" (Qur'an 6:102, 13:16, 39:62, 40:62) and it is the belief of all Muslims that everything in the world, small or big, great or insignificant, were all created by Him. However, despite this, our jurists have clearly stated that it is impermissible to call him "the Creator of monkeys and swine." Likewise, in the Noble Qur'an, "farming" is attributed to Him (Qur'an 56:64), yet it is incorrect to unqualifiedly use "farmer" for His essence. Similarly, the Arabs unqualifiedly use the term *rizq* (sustenance) for the provisions and positions the commander endowed to the men of his army; thus in many books of Arabic language the sentence "the commander sustained the army" is written, although it is incorrect to refer to the commander as *raziq* or *razzaq* (sustainer). And on the subject of the blessed qualities of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), it is narrated from Hazrat 'A'ishah Siddiqah (Allah be pleased with her): "He would mend his own shoes, and he would milk his camels himself." Despite this, the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) cannot be referred to as a cobbler or milker. Anyhow, the reality that in some instances a particular attribute may be found in an essence, yet its unqualified usage for him is incorrect, is incontrovertible.

I hope that from this introduction my readers have understood that [the question of] the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) possessing knowledge of *ghayb* or not is a separate discussion from the issue of the permissibility or impermissibility of unqualifiedly using "knower of the *ghayb*" for his blessed essence; and there is no necessary correlation between the two. Once this matter has been settled in the mind, now understand that the objective of Hazrat Mawlana (Allah have mercy on him) in this place of *Hifz al-Iman* was only to establish that it is impermissible to unqualifiedly use "knower of the *ghayb*" for the holy essence of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace); and to prove that the way the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is remembered using such terms as "the Seal of the Prophets," "the Chief of the Messengers," "the Mercy to all Worlds" etc. etc., the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) cannot be remembered with the title "knower of the *ghayb*." For [support of] this claim, Mawlana presented two proofs.

The upshot of the first evidence is that since in the general usages of the Shari'ah "knower of the *ghayb*" is said for that being who knows the matters of the *ghayb* without medium and without being taught by another - and that is the exclusive distinction of the Real Almighty –if any other being is called "knower of the *ghayb*," because of this general usage, the minds of people will shift in that direction, that he too possesses

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[31] Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali al-Thanawi (d. 1943) was alive at the time of writing this piece and when it was first published in 1933 CE.

knowledge of *ghayb* without medium, which is an explicit belief of *shirk*. Thus, to refer to anyone as "knower of the *ghayb*" besides the Real (Glorious is His Majesty) without an indication by which is known that the intent of the speaker is not knowledge that is without means, is, therefore, incorrect as there is resemblance with a belief of *shirk*. This is why in the Qur'an and hadith such words were forbidden which will generate this kind of misunderstanding. For example, the Noble Qur'an prohibits addressing the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) with *ra'ina*[32] (2:104) and the noble hadith prohibits calling one's servants "my slaves" because these words are suggestive of a false meaning even if not the intention of the speaker. This was a summary of Hazrat Mawlana Thanawi's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) first evidence.

However, since Khan Sahib did not object to this proof of Mawlana – in fact, in many places of his book *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*, Khan Sahib wrote approximately the same content in complete detail – there is no need for me to present any justification or support for it.

Now, I will turn my attention to the second evidence of Mawlana, and here that sentence is found about which Khan Sahib claimed, "He stated clearly therein that the equivalent of the Messenger of Allah's (Allah bless him and grant him peace) knowledge of the unseen has been acquired by every child and every madman, rather every animal and every beast."

But before quoting the original passage of *Hifz al-Iman*, in order to facilitate the understanding of the readers, I feel it will be appropriate to mention that in this second proof, Mawlana divided the matter into two options [for the opponent] whereupon he proved the inaccuracy and falsity of both.

The upshot of the second proof of Mawlana is that a person, for example Zayd, who unqualifiedly uses "knower of the *ghayb*" for the holy essence of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and refers to him as "knower of the *ghayb*," says this either because according to him the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) has knowledge of some *ghayb* or because he has knowledge of full *ghayb*. The second alternative is false because the absence of the knowledge of full *ghayb* from the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) is proven by rational and transmitted proofs, and Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib himself says this. And the first alternative, meaning, referring to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as "knower of the *ghayb*" because of some *ghayb*, is false because in this scenario it would entail that every person, rather even animals, can be called "knower of the *ghayb*" because some matters of the *ghayb* are possessed by all, as every animate being must have some knowledge which is hidden from another. Thus, based on this alternative, since it entails calling everyone "knower of the *ghayb*" and this is rationally, scripturally and customarily, that is, in every way, false, that which necessitates it, meaning, Zayd referring to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as "knower of the *ghayb*" because of some knowledge of the *ghayb*, will also be false. This is a summary of Mawlana's entire argument. Now, I will present the original passage of *Hifz al-Iman* with clarification [in parenthesis].

[32] In its original Arabic usage *ra'ina* means, "Observe us," but with a slightly different pronunciation it can be construed as an insult which some of the Jews exploited by "twisting their tongues" (Qur'an 4:46) to outwardly express the commonly understood meaning while intending insult and degradation. Consequently, the believers were forbidden from using it.

The Passage of *Hifz al-Iman* and its Clarification

After completing the write-up of the first evidence, Mawlana writes:

> If according to the statement of Zayd, it is valid to apply the ruling of the knowledge of *ghayb* to his holy essence (meaning, calling the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) "knower of the *ghayb*" and unqualifiedly using "knower of the *ghayb*" for his holy essence), then he (i.e. this Zayd) will be asked: "From this ruling, is the '*ghayb*' (meaning, the *ghayb* which occurs in the title "knower of the *ghayb*" because of which he refers to the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as "knower of the *ghayb*") intended as some *ghayb* or full *ghayb*?"
>
> (Here Hazrat Mawlana asked this person who called the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) "knower of the *ghayb*" and believed it to be permissible, whose hypothetical name is Zayd, that based on what consideration do you refer to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as "knower of the *ghayb*"? Is it because the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) has some knowledge of *ghayb*? Or is it because he has full knowledge of *ghayb*?)
>
> If some knowledge of *ghayb* is intended (meaning, because of some knowledge of *ghayb*, you called the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) "knower of the *ghayb*", and your principle is that whoever has some knowledge of *ghayb* you refer to him as "knower of the *ghayb*"), what distinction is there in this (meaning, in mere knowledge of some *ghayb* because of which someone is referred to as "knower of the *ghayb*") for the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace)? Such (partial) knowledge of the *ghayb* (because of which you believe it is necessary to call someone "knower of the *ghayb*," meaning, generally some knowledge of the unseen) is available to Zayd and 'Amr, rather every child and madman, rather even all animals and quadrupeds; because every person has knowledge of such and such a matter which is hidden from a second person; then all should be called "knower of the *ghayb*" (based on your principle that because of mere knowledge of some *ghayb*, a person may be called "knower of the *ghayb*").

An Explanation of the Distortion of Khan Sahib Barelwi of the Passage of *Hifz al-Iman*

This was the original passage of Hazrat Mawlana, and this was its clear and explicit intent which I have presented. However, Khan Sahib, in his commentary, gave it such a meaning that even Satan after listening to it will seek refuge. In this respect, a brief description of the distortion that Khan Sahib did is as follows:

1. The word *eysa* (such) appears in the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*, and its intent is some knowledge of *ghayb* in an absolute sense, not the blessed knowledge of the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace). However, Khan Sahib took its intent as the blessed knowledge of the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace), and wrote: "He stated clearly therein that the equivalent of the Messenger of Allah's (Allah bless him and grant him peace)

knowledge of the unseen has been acquired by every child and every madman, rather every animal and every beast."

2. The original passage of *Hifz al-Iman* was as follows: "Such knowledge of the *ghayb* is available to Zayd and 'Amr, rather every child and madman, rather even all animals and quadrupeds; <u>because every person has knowledge of such and such a matter which is hidden from a second person</u>." Khan Sahib totally omitted this underlined sentence in the middle of his quote because it is clearly understood from it that the knowledge that is conceded for Zayd, 'Amr etc. is some knowledge of *ghayb* in an absolute sense, not (Allah forbid!) the blessed knowledge of the Messenger of the Lord (Allah bless him and grant him peace).

3. After the abovementioned passage of *Hifz al-Iman*, the conclusion of the *ilzami* argument[33] is worded as: "then all should be called 'knower of the *ghayb*'." Khan Sahib also omitted this, because from this sentence it is completely clear that the discussion of the author of *Hifz al-Iman* was not about the extent of the knowledge of the Prophet, the Joy of the World (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Rather, his discussion was only about the unqualified usage of "knower of the *ghayb*." After having realised this, the reality of the entire scheme of Khan Sahib is laid bare.

Anyhow, in order to declare the author of *Hifz al-Iman* a disbeliever, Khan Sahib committed this deception, and those sentences from which the meaning of the passage of *Hifz al-Iman* can easily be understood was completely omitted in the middle, and he only quoted the first and last part of the passage. Shrewdly, in the Arabic translation of the passage of *Hifz al-Iman* which he presented before the scholars of the two Harams, he gave no indication from which those revered scholars could have understood that in the middle of this passage some sentences were missing. Our readers can see this handiwork in the Arabic passage of Khan Sahib's *Husam al-Haramayn*, which I quoted from *Husam al-Haramayn* at the beginning of this discussion with its exact wording.

More Explanation of the Passage from *Hifz al-Iman*

Although the dishonesty of Khan Sahib and the condition of his fatwa will be understood by the readers from this explanation, to explain further, I wish to shed more light on its particular parts.

The upshot of the second evidence of Hazrat Hakim al-Ummah (his shadow extend) was this:

There are two scenarios in which the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) can be called "knower of the *ghayb*." One is that, because of full *ghayb*, he is called "knower of the *ghayb*." The second is that, because of some *ghayb*, [he is called so]. The first option is false because the absence of his knowledge of all *ghayb* is established by transmitted and rational proofs. And the second option is false because some knowledge of *ghayb* is possessed even by insignificant things in this world; so based on this principle, everyone should be called "knower of the *ghayb*" which is baseless in every way.

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33 Meaning, an argument in the form of presenting an absurdity as the necessary consequence of an opponent's claim in order to refute the claim itself.

If the parts of this proof are broken down, it will be realised that its basic premises are as follows:

1. So long as a principle does not subsist in a certain being, its morphological derivative [for example, the active participle] cannot be unqualifiedly used for it. For example, a person can be called "knower" when the attribute of knowledge is found in his essence; and that person is called "ascetic" in whom the attribute of asceticism subsists; and that person is called "writer" who has attained the quality of writing; and other such examples.

2. With the cause, its effect must be found. It is not possible that the cause is found but the effect is not.

3. The Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not acquire knowledge of all *ghayb*.

4. Generally some awareness of the unseen is available to non-prophets, rather nonhumans.

5. Every Zayd and 'Amr cannot be called "knower of the *ghayb*."

6. The falsity of the consequence (*lazim*) necessitates the falsity of that which it is consequential upon (*malzum*), meaning, if the acceptance of something necessarily leads to an absurdity, it is itself absurd.

From these premises, the first two and the last two are rationally accepted principles, and clearly intuitive, which no sane person in the world will dispute. This is why right away I will establish the third and fourth premises from the clear statements of Khan Sahib.

The accuser is a thousand times weightier than your witness

Proof of the most Important Premises of *Hifz al-Iman* from the Statements of Khan Sahib himself

The third premise of Hazrat Mawlana Thanawi was that the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not acquire full knowledge of the *ghayb*. Take note of its proofs from the statements of the Barelwi learned man:

The aforementioned learned man wrote on page 25 of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*:

> For indeed we do not claim that he (Allah bless him and grant him peace) had encompassed all the things known to Allah (Glorified and Exalted is He), for indeed it is impossible for creation.

And in the same *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*, he writes:

> And we do not affirm through the bestowal of Allah Almighty also but a part. (*al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*, p 28)

And this Khan Sahib writes on page 34 of *Tamhid e Iman*:

> Even the knowledge of the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) does not encompass all things known to the Divine.

Furthermore, on page 34 of this *Tamhid* is written:

> And encompassing knowledge of all things known to the Divine is also false and against most scholars.

The import, nay the objective, of all these passages of Khan Sahib is that the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) did not acquire knowledge of all *ghayb*. Rather, acquisition of detailed knowledge of all the unseen is impossible for him, nay for all creatures, and believing in this is false and against most scholars. And this is precisely the third premise in Mawlana Thanawi's evidence. With praise to Allah, from the explicit statements of Khan Sahib, this has become clear as daylight. So all praise is due to Allah.

The fourth premise of the evidence of Mawlana Thanawi under inspection was that generally awareness of some unseen matters is realised by non-prophets, rather non-humans too.

Take note of its proof from the statements of Khan Sahib Barelwi also:

The aforementioned learned man wrote on page 13 of *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah*:

> Indeed we believe in the Resurrection, and in the Garden and the Fire, and in Allah Almighty and the seven fundamentals of His (Exalted and Majestic is He) attributes, and all of this is *ghayb*. And we know each in its own right, distinguished from other than it, so this necessitates the acquisition of general detailed knowledge of the unseen for every believer.

Moreover, this Khan Sahib says on page 24 of *Khalis al-I'tiqad*:

> Allah Almighty said about the Muslims, "they believe in the unseen" (Qur'an 2:3). Belief is consent, and consent is knowledge. The thing which is fundamentally unknowable, how is its belief possible? Indeed [it says] in *al-Tafsir al-Kabir*: "There is no obstacle in saying, 'We know of the *ghayb* that for which we have evidence.'"

It is known from these two passages of Khan Sahib that some knowledge of the *ghayb* is necessary for every believer.

The aforementioned [Khan Sahib] said regarding a prophecy of his father:

> This was a prophecy made forty years ago. Allah Almighty grants His accepted slaves knowledge of *ghayb* because they are the bearers of the shoes of the slaves of the slaves of the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace). (*Malfuzat A'la Hazrat*)

In proving that in and of itself, unveiling (*kashf*) is nothing of perfection, rather may happen to non-Muslims, nay nonhumans too, Khan Sahib quoted an elder of his who he explicitly called a "friend of Allah" the story of a strange and wonderful donkey who had the ability of unveiling:

> I was going to Egypt. There, there was a great gathering. I saw a man with a donkey whose eyes were tied with a stone. One person's belonging would be placed in the possession of another person. Then the donkey would be asked [about its location], and the donkey would circle the entire gathering, until it reached the person who had it, and in front of him he would bow. (*Malfuzat*, Part 4, p. 11)

After this, Khan Sahib said:

> Thus, it is understood that the attribute which is possible for a nonhuman, it is not a perfection for a human being. (Part 4, p. 11)

It is known from this statement of Khan Sahib that according to him, this donkey also knew some hidden things. And this is the objective.

I have quoted one passage from Khan Sahib's *al-Dawlat al-Makkiyyah* in which is clearly stated that Allah Almighty, His attributes, the Garden and the Fire, the Angels etc. etc. are all matters of the *ghayb*, and this is completely correct.

Based on this, even though the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) in his essence is not *ghayb*, his messengership is no doubt a matter of the *ghayb*, because it is not a tangible and physical thing, rather there is a hidden connection between Allah and the Messenger which is beyond the comprehension of our sense faculties, and based only on the integrity of the Messenger, he is accepted [as the Messenger of Allah]. Thus, whoever acquires knowledge of the existence of Allah Almighty, His oneness or the messengership of the Messenger, he has acquired some knowledge of the unseen; and Khan Sahib concedes that everything in existence, even the leaves of trees and sands of the desert, is accountable for believing in Divine oneness and the messengership. They glorify the Lord and testify to the prophethood and messengership of the Messenger of the Lord (Allah bless him and grant him peace).

For example, on Part 4, page 77, of Khan Sahib's *Malfuzat*, he writes:

> Everything is accountable for believing in the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and for glorifying the Lord.

Moreover, on page 78 of it is written:

> A particular spirituality is connected to every plant and every inanimate object, whether that is called a "soul" or something else; and that thing is accountable for faith and glorification. It says in a hadith: "There is nothing but it knows that I am the Messenger of Allah, except the rebellious of the jinn and man."

The following matters are established from these statements of Khan Sahib:

1. Every believer must know some matters of the *ghayb*
2. Even non-Muslims experience unveiling
3. Even a stupid animal like a donkey has knowledge of some hidden matters
4. All things in existence, even plants and inanimate objects, know some things of *ghayb*

And this was the fourth premise in the proof of Mawlana Thanawi.

The result is that those premises on which Mawlana's proof were based, four are accepted principles of reason and are completely intuitive, and two were dependent on proofs, which I have, with praise to Allah, proven from the clear expressions of Khan Sahib. Thus, our readers know that the proof on which Khan Sahib attached the ruling of disbelief on Hazrat Mawlana in all its parts are accepted by Khan Sahib, and if it necessitated disbelief, then Khan Sahib has an equal share in that disbelief.

Whatever you say, I will sacrifice myself for you and follow you

Although there is no need to present anything else regarding the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*, but for further clarification, I will finally present an illustration of the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*.

An Illustration of the Passage from *Hifz al-Iman*

Suppose that some disciple or devotee of Khan Sahib refers to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as "knower of the *ghayb*" and believes it to be permissible. To him I ask: "Do you refer to the Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as 'knower of the *ghayb'* because of full *ghayb* or some *ghayb*? If full *ghayb*, then that is, according to the speech of Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib, absurd rationally, and false scripturally, rather, impossible. And if you refer to the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) as 'knower of the *ghayb*' because of some *ghayb*, and it is your principle that whoever has knowledge of some *ghayb*, you will call him 'knower of the *ghayb*,' then the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) has no distinction in this because some matters of *ghayb* are possessed by every believer, rather all of humanity, rather all things, even animals and inanimate objects, so based on your principle it is necessary that you call everything in the world 'knower of the *ghayb*.' Now, if you say that you call everything 'knower of the *ghayb*,' in that case, what praise will emerge from calling the Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace) 'knower of the *ghayb*' as in your view everyone is called 'knower of the *ghayb*'?"

Respected readers, note: Will any sane person understand the meaning of my speech as (Allah forbid!) I made the knowledge of everything in the world equal to the knowledge of the Holy Prophet (Allah bless him and grant him peace)?

Take note of another more general illustration:

Suppose that the king of a country is extremely generous. Here he operates a public kitchen, and he feeds thousands of needy and poor people in the morning and evening. Now, some idiot, for example Zayd, calls that king *raziq* (sustainer). A second person, say 'Amr, asks him: "Brother, why do you refer to the king as *raziq*? Is it because he gives sustenance to all creation? Or is it because he feeds some people? The first is obviously false, so only the second option remains, which is that the king is called *raziq* because he feeds some people. In this, there is no distinction for him because even a poor man and an unimportant labourer at least fills the bellies of their children, and people being people they will certainly have concern for their children but even small birds feed their chicks, so according to this principle of yours, everyone will be called *raziq*..."

It should be asked, did 'Amr mean by this statement that the generous and beneficent king and every poor and unimportant labourer are equal in their generosity? It is obvious

that this understanding is [a manifestation of] the idiocy of the one who understood it. Thus, whatever was said in *Hifz al-Iman* is nothing more than this.

After this, I will present one passage from *Sharh al-Mawaqif* of the accepted [scholar] of Ahl al-Sunna, Imam 'Allamah Sayyid Sharif (Allah have mercy on him), which has complete resemblance with the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*, so that after reading this no Sunni Muslim will dare to open his mouth against *Hifz al-Iman*, because whatever is in *Hifz al-Iman*, is approximately a translation of this passage from *Sharh al-Mawaqif*. The 'Allamah wrote [underlined is the original text of al-Iji and the remainder is from the commentary, *Sharh al-Mawaqif*]:

> **As for the philosophers, they say: He** i.e. the prophet **is the one in whom three special features combine**, by which he is distinguished from others. **The first of them**, i.e. the first of the matters that are specific to him, **is that he is cognizant of the *ghayb***, the present, the past and the future.

After this, in a few lines, he proves on behalf of the philosophers that this matter is not farfetched for the prophets (upon them peace). Then he says on behalf of the philosophers:

> **And why** would this cognizance [of the *ghayb*] in respect to the prophet be considered farfetched, **when** that is **found in those you say his preoccupations are exercise** with [various] types of [spiritual] struggles, **or illness**, averting the soul from preoccupation with the body and using sensory organs, **or sleep**, disconnecting thereby his external senses; since these [individuals] are cognizant of the *ghayb* and give information about it as attested to by transmission and experience whereby no doubt about it remains for those who are just?

This was a description of the position of the philosophers and their proofs. After this, the author (Allah have mercy on him) gives an answer on behalf of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, and says:

> **We say:** What you mentioned is **rejected** for [various] reasons: **because cognizance of all** *ghayb* **is not necessary for the prophet by agreement** between us and you, and for this [reason] the Chief of the Prophets said, "Had I knowledge of the *ghayb*, I should have abundance of wealth, and adversity would not touch me" (Qur'an 7:188); **and a part**, i.e. cognizance of part [of the *ghayb*], **is not specific to him**, i.e. to the prophet, **as you have agreed**, since you allowed it for the exercisers, the ill and the sleepers, so the prophet is not distinguished thereby from others.

Fair readers should take note, what is the difference between this passage of *Sharh al-Mawaqif* and the passage of *Hifz al-Iman* under inquiry?

I hope that after this explanation of the passage from *Hifz al-Iman*, no doubt of the opponents remains. To complete the proof for this, I will briefly quote the answer which Hazrat Mawlana Thanawi wrote in his reply to this slander.

When this fatwa, *Husam al-Haramayn*, of Mawlawi Ahad Rida Khan Sahib was published, and it caused a great stir, the respected Mawlana Sayyid Murtaza Hasan Sahib wrote a letter to Mawlana Thanawi:

> Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib Barelwi wrote with respect to you that you (Allah forbid!) stated explicitly in *Hifz al-Iman* that the equivalent of the

> knowledge the Messenger of Allah (Allah bless him and grant him peace) possesses from the matters of the *ghayb* is possessed by every child and every madman and every animal. Did you write this anywhere in *Hifz al-Iman*, and is this your belief? And if this is not your belief, what is your position towards someone who holds this revolting belief? (Summarised from *Bast al-Banan*)

Hazrat Mawlana Thanawi gave the answer:

> I did not write this revolting content in any book. Let alone writing it, this thought never crossed my heart. Nor is it the necessary conclusion of any passage of mine, as I will explain later. Since I understand this content to be revolting...how can it be my intent? That person who believes this, or without belief utters it explicitly or implicitly, I believe this person to be outside the fold of Islam because he has denied decisive texts and lessened the Revered Joy and Pride of the World, the Prophet, Allah bless him and grant him peace.

After this, in that book, which has been published in this time under the name *Bast al-Banan*, Hazrat Mawlana (may his shadow be lengthened) gave a detailed reply to this accusation of Khan Sahib and explained the meaning of the passage from *Hifz al-Iman* under discussion. However, now there is no need to quote it because all that I wrote to explain this passage above is in effect an elaboration of this answer of Hazrat Mawlana.

Respected readers carefully note how far the Barelwi learned man was from truth and integrity in this fatwa.

And Allah is the One Who guides to the path of rightness.

Addendum:
The Author of *Hifz al-Iman*'s Search for Truth and Noble Declaration of Rewording the Passage from *Hifz al-Iman*

Respected readers! The debate-style reply to the fatwa of disbelief which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib issued in *Husam al-Haramayn* by attributing a heretical content to *Hifz al-Iman* has finished, and the readers are aware that its reality is nothing besides slander and fabrication, and the author of *Hifz al-Iman* is completely innocent of this impure and heretical belief.

After this, knowing this will, if Allah wills, make you even more content, that when a sincere person drew the attention of Hazrat Mawlana Ashraf 'Ali Sahib Thanawi (Allah have mercy on him) by saying that "although the passage of *Hifz al-Iman* in reality is completely sound and free of doubt, if the words with which the ungodly and obstinate people deceive the fickle simpleminded commoners were changed in such-and-such a way, these commoners who are susceptible to *fitnah* would not succumb to the deception, so for the sake of the fickle laypeople this would be best," Hazrat prayed for the one who gave him this advice and wholeheartedly accepted the advice and changed the passage in the following way:

In the old passage, the sentence which began as "such knowledge of the *ghayb*" was substituted for the sentence: "mere knowledge of some unseen matters has been attained by non-prophets." This incident occurred in Safar of 1342 H (September 1923 CE). Thus, approximately 32 years ago this revision had taken place in the passage of *Hifz al-Iman*. After this, *Hifz al-Iman* has continued to be printed with this revision. Rather, the entire circumstance behind this revision and its announcement on behalf of the revered author (Allah have mercy on him) was printed as an addendum to *Hifz al-Iman* called *Taghyir al-'Unwan*.

Then after this, in Jumada al-Ukhra of 1354 H, it happened that because of the advice of a certain individual, the worthless writer of these lines (Muhammad Manzur Nu'mani) himself proposed in the presence of Hazrat Hakim al-Ummah (Allah have mercy on him), that the intent of the words "apply the ruling of the knowledge of *ghayb*" at the very beginning of the passage from *Hifz al-Iman* which the obstinate ones object to, is, without doubt, the unqualified usage of "knower of the *ghayb*," which is obvious from the preceding and succeeding parts of this passage, and in *Bast al-Banan* and *Taghyir al-'Unwan*, Hazrat stated explicitly this; so if in the original passage "ruling" is changed to "unqualified usage" the matter will become even more clear and will leave no room for doubt. Hazrat, without contemplation, accepted this and changed the sentence as follows: "Furthermore, if unqualifiedly using 'knower of the *ghayb*' for the holy essence is sound according to the statement of Zayd..." And he instructed this worthless one to announce this revision on his behalf. Thus, on Rajab of 1354 H, in [the journal] *al-Furqan*, at that time, this announcement was made.

Anyhow, after those two revisions, the passage of *Hifz al-Iman* reads as follows:

> Furthermore, if unqualifiedly using "knower of the *ghayb*" for the holy essence is sound according to the statement of Zayd, he will be asked about this matter, that, is the intent of this *ghayb* some *ghayb* or all *ghayb*? If some unseen sciences is intended, what distinction is there for the Prophet (Allah bless him and

> grant him peace) in this? Mere knowledge of some unseen matters has been attained by non-prophets, so everyone should be called "knower of the *ghayb*."

The result is that our elders declared their innocence and detest for the heretical beliefs which Mawlawi Ahmad Rida Khan Sahib upon attributing to them with outright tenacity declared them disbelievers; and along with this, they explained the true and real meaning of those passages besides which those passages can have no other meaning; and they also proved that there is nothing in them that is against the teachings and beliefs of the Ahl al-Sunnah; and after all this, when in order to protect a fickle simpleminded layman from misunderstanding, if any slave of Allah sincerely advised them to change it, then without deliberation and without any ill feeling, they accepted [the advice] and changed the passage. No doubt this is clear evidence of their sincere truth-seeking and selflessness. How unfortunate! - how unjust and wretched are those people who call these slaves of Allah disbelievers!

Muhammad Manzur Nu'mani (Allah pardon him)
21, Dhu al-Hijjah, 1373 Hijri

Appendix A:
Summary of Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi's Exegesis of the Phrase "Seal of the Prophets" in *Tahzir al-Nas*

Tahzirun Nas is a treatise in the form of a legal response (fatwa) from Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi to a question posed regarding the belief that a report from 'Abd Allah Ibn 'Abbas confirming the existence of prophets like the prophets on this earth on six other earths is authentic, and how acceptance of the narration impacts on the Prophet's (peace and blessings be upon him) position as the last and final prophet. (*Tahzir al-Nas min Inkar Athar ibn 'Abbas*, Mawlana Qasim Nanotwi, Idarat al-'Aziz Publishers, 2001, p. 40)

He begins with a lengthy explanation of the term "Seal of the Prophets" mentioned in the Qur'an, which he states if fully understood, would assist in answering the original question. Then he presents an exegetical dilemma on the interpretation of this phrase in the context of the verse. In the understanding of the common people, this simply means the last of a series of prophets. However, coming before or after in this chronological sense, does not in and of itself confer excellence [as, for example, the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) is superior to many prophets who came after him]. (ibid. p. 41)

However, the term "Seal of the Prophets" must be a term of merit and praise for two reasons: First, those things which are not praiseworthy in relation to his prophethood, like shape, colour, lineage, etc. are not given as titles to him in the Qur'an, so its mention without merit would be imagined as an "excess" in His speech, as there would be no difference between mentioning it and not mentioning it. Second, with respect to the people of perfection, like prophets and saints, titles used for them are for the purpose of adorning them with praise and merit, as is clear from historical writings, so the assumption that it is not praise may lead to lessening the greatness of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). (ibid. p. 42)

One objection to this reasoning is that the term "Seal of the Prophets" with this meaning is not devoid of purpose and benefit, as Islam, being the final religion, must negate the legitimacy of any false future claimants to prophethood who may be the cause of the misguidance of many. Hence, with this meaning of "the Seal of the Prophets," this door leading to misguidance is closed. (ibid. p. 42)

The Conjunction of Rectification (*istidrak*) in Qur'an 33:40 implies the Term "Seal of the Prophets" Affirms Spiritual Fatherhood

Mawlana Nanotwi explains that, even then, with the lone meaning of "last chronological prophet" for the phrase "Seal of the Prophets," the exegete is not free of difficulties. This is because the verse reads: "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets." (33:40). The word "but" (*lakin*) is a conjunction (*'atf*) used for *istidrak* (rectification), that is, to correct a doubt (*shubh*) or false assumption that may have been created from the previous sentence. Hence, the sentence that he is "the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of the Prophets," must be correcting a misconception that may arise from the sentence, "Muhammad is not the father of any of your men." (ibid. p. 42)

While the verse clearly negates biological and physical (*jismani*) fatherhood, the doubt may arise that he does not deserve the respect a father deserves, or that he does not

hold the position of a spiritual (*ma'nawi*) father to anyone, and this false assumption is corrected by the sentence, "but the Messenger of Allah and the Seal of Prophets." Thus, by this latter sentence, the doubt that he is not the "father" in any sense of the word is corrected. Spiritual fatherhood of this ummah is determined in the phrase "the Messenger of Allah," and spiritual fatherhood of all previous prophets, and by extension, their peoples, is determined in the phrase "the Seal of the Prophets." (ibid. p. 57)

The term "Messenger" implies he is the spiritual father of the ummah. Mawlana Nanotwi explains this at length in conjunction with the verse of the Qur'an which states, "The Prophet is closer to the believers than themselves." (33:6) Because our belief is a consequence of his deliverance of the message from Allah, and as such, his belief was given directly by Allah, while our belief was acquired by means of him, he is our spiritual father. Mawlana Nanotwi writes extensively on this point based on linguistic, theological and philological analyses. (ibid. pp. 58-64)

Essential Sealship and its Proofs

In the same way the term "Messenger of Allah" implies he is the spiritual father of this nation, the term "Seal of the Prophets," which is also part of the "rectification" (*istidrak*), implies he is the spiritual father of the previous prophets, and by extension the peoples of all the previous prophets. (ibid. pp. 57-58)

The verification Mawlana Nanotwi offers in explanation of this reality is that the prophethood of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is essential in that it was not gained from any other prophet but was given to him directly by Allah upon his creation, while the prophethood of all other prophets is accidental, that is, derived from his prophethood. Thus, their prophethood and all the perfections of their prophethood come to an end upon his prophethood and are in fact derived from his prophethood, and in this sense he is the "Seal of the Prophets." (ibid. p. 43)

Mawlana Nanotwi gives three detailed proofs for this:

First, verse 3:81 of the Qur'an which states: "[Remember] when We took the covenant of the prophets: Indeed, that which I have given to you of book and wisdom, then a Messenger [i.e. Muhammad (peace be upon him)] confirming what is with you comes to you, you must believe in him and you must render him help." This verse proves the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is the "Prophets' Prophet" (*nabi al-anbiya*) as all prophets are commanded to believe in him and render him help if he were to appear in their time. Hence, Mawlana Nanotwi concludes that their prophethood is subject to his essential prophethood. This is also indicated by the hadith which states: "If Musa (upon him peace) was living, he would have no option but to follow me," and is also indicated by the fact that upon 'Isa's (upon him peace) return he will be a follower of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). In this way, the prophethood of all other prophets ends and comes to a stop at the prophethood of the Seal of the Prophets (peace and blessings be upon him), as his prophethood is not an effusion (*fayd*) of or secondary (*bi wasitah*) to any other prophethood, while theirs is an effusion of his. Hence, his prophethood gathers and seals the perfections of all prophets. The hadith, "I was the Seal of the Prophets with Allah while Adam was mixed with clay," can be understood in this way, that his prophethood was the initial spring of prophethood from which the other prophets gained their prophethood. (ibid. p. 44)

Second, there are two types of perfections: knowledge and deeds. Four categories of people are praised in the Qur'an: Prophets, saints (*siddiqin*), martyrs (*shuhada*) and pious (*salihin*) (4:69). The first two have perfections in knowledge and the second two in deeds. Prophets are the source of perfection in knowledge and saints their repositories and martyrs are the source of perfection in deeds and the pious their repositories. The word *nabi* (prophet) is derived from *naba'a* which means to inform, and *siddiq* (saint) from *saddaqa* which means to assent, so the Prophets are the fountainheads of knowledge and the saints its repositories i.e. those who assent to that knowledge. This is also corroborated by the hadith, "Whatever Allah poured into my chest I poured into the chest of Abu Bakr," who is known as "the greatest *siddiq*." Here, Mawlana Nanotwi also makes the point that because prophethood is perfection in knowledge and not deeds, apparently (*bizahir*) a follower's deeds may become equal to or exceed the deeds of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). (ibid. pp. 44-48) The reason he mentions "apparently" or "outwardly" is because this is in terms of the "quantity" and not the quality of deeds, while his knowledge is both quantitatively and qualitatively superior. Although this statement was misused by the detractors of Mawlana Nanotwi to malign him, the very same point was articulated by Imam al-Razi under verse 2:34 of the Qur'an, in which he says, "We do indeed find in the ummah those who have a longer life and strive more rigorously than the Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him." This statement of fact, that sometimes outwardly a follower performs more good deeds than the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) was used by al-Razi as a premise in his argument just as it was by Mawlana Nanotwi.

Mawlana Nanotwi also explains in some detail how martyrdom and piety are perfections in deeds and not knowledge. (pp. 48-49)

The knowledge of the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) was complete and perfect, while the knowledge of other Prophets was not as complete and perfect as his. Hence, he said, "I was taught (*'ullimtu*)," or "I was given (*utitu*) the knowledge of the first and the last," i.e. my knowledge encompasses the spiritual knowledge of all peoples. This is because he is the true knower (*'alim haqiqi*) while the knowledge of all other knowers is derived from him. In just the same way our knowledge from our sense faculties combine in our rational soul (*nafs natiqah*), and the senses do not themselves "perceive," knowledge of the divine and otherworldly realities combine in the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) and originate in him, while for everyone else before and after him, it is derived from him. Verse 3:81 of the Qur'an describes the Prophet as "confirming all that is with you [i.e. the prophets]," where the word *ma* (that) is general (*'am*), so includes all the knowledge in the books of the prophets that were sent previously. Hence, his essential knowledge – essential in the sense that it is not derived from any other but was given to him directly by Allah – is a corollary of his essential prophethood as prophethood is a perfection in knowledge, while the knowledge of other prophets and their prophethood is derived from his. Another proof which Mawlana Nanotwi presents for this perfection in knowledge is his greatest miracle, the Qur'an, which is a book of knowledge and "an explanation of all things" (Qur'an 16:89). (ibid. pp. 44-50)

Third, the hadith, "I was a Prophet while Adam was between body and spirit," as it proves his prophethood was determined at a time before the creation of Adam, and his prophethood supersedes the prophethood all prophets. (ibid. p. 50)

Mawlana Nanotwi concludes based on these evidences that the prophethood of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) is essential, that is, not derived from any other prophet, while that of other prophets is accidental and derived from his; and with this meaning, "the Seal of the Prophets" in the sense of the spiritual paternity of prophets fulfils the condition of the "rectification" (*istidrak*) in the verse.

Chronological Prophetic Sealship (*khatm nubuwwat zamani*) is a Necessary Consequence of Essential Prophetic Sealship (*khatm nubuwwat zati*)

Mawlana Nanotwi explains that Essential Sealship as described above also necessarily implies that he is the last of all Prophets chronologically. This is because the hypothetical new prophet will either bring a new law, or will not, and in both cases, the Essential Sealship of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) prevents this from happening.

If the hypothetical prophet that was commissioned after the Seal of the Prophets came with a different law, this would mean a lesser prophet abrogated the law of a greater prophet, which is contrary to the rule established in verse 2:106 of the Qur'an that states: "We do not abrogate any revelation, or cause it to be forgotten, except we bring better than it or the like of it." (ibid. p. 52)

And if he were to bring the same law, this prophethood would hold no meaning as prophethood is a perfection in knowledge and all knowledge has culminated in the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him), and his perfect knowledge kept in the Book that is an "explanation of all things" will forever be preserved (Qur'an 15:9); as opposed to the lesser prophets of the Children of Israel as the knowledge given to them was corrupted. Therefore, no new prophet can emerge after the Seal of the Prophets, with or without a new law. Hence, chronological finality (*ta'akkhur zamani*) is a necessary consequence of essential finality. (ibid. pp. 52-53)

The Multiple Meanings of Final

Coming first or last (*taqaddum*/*ta'akhkhur*) is a generic attribute (*jins*) which manifests in three different ways: chronological (*zamani*), spatial (*makani*) and positional (*rutbi*). Seal (*khatam*) implies finality, and thus also bears these three possible meanings. If however only one of the three meanings are meant in the statement "Seal of the Prophets" there must be a word omitted in the middle; i.e. it is either *khatam zaman al-nabiyyin* (seal of the time of the prophets), *khatam rutbat al-nabiyyin* (seal of the position of the prophets) or *khatam makan al-nabiyyin* (seal of the place of the prophets). However, in such generic words, if all meanings can be adopted, that is the preferred option. Hence, the preferred view according to Mawlana Nanotwi is that the complete signification (*dalala mutabiqi*) of the term "the Seal of the Prophets" is finality in terms of time, place and position. (ibid.p. 53-55)

This is akin to the verse, "Wine, gambling, altars and divining arrows, are only filth (*rijs*)," (5:90) where "filth" is a general (*'am*) word including external and internal filth since wine is externally filthy and the others internally filthy. In the same way "filth" is inclusive of a number of subcategories with differing qualities included under its general meaning, "Seal" is inclusive of a number of subcategories included under its general meaning. Finality in merit was explained as Essential Sealship. Chronological finality

means his time came after all prophets. And spatial finality entails prophethood manifesting on the highest of all earths, which is explained in hadiths that reveal that the earth we inhabit is the uppermost of all earths and the six remaining earths also have prophets as confirmed in the report of Ibn ‘Abbas in question.

Conclusion

The benefit of this interpretation, Mawlana Nanotwi insists, is that it solves the rectification (*istidrak*) present in the verse, it explains what Seal means in the best possible way, while not compromising on the chronological finality of the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him). He writes: "Now you can see that if this view is accepted, the conjunction between the two sentences, the rectification and exception, will become clear, and Sealship is established in the best possible way, and Chronological Sealship is also not lost from one's hand (*aur khatamiyyat zamani bhi hath sey nehi jati*)." (ibid. p. 57)

Appendix B:
Al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi's Explanation of the Epithet "Seal of the Prophets" in *Kitab Khatm al-Awliya'*

Abu 'Abd Allah Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn al-Hasan al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi (230 – 320 H), a great scholar of hadith and Usul, author of the well-known work *Nawadir al-Usul*, and from the great masters of the science of tasawwuf, wrote in his work *Kitab Khatm al-Awliya'*:

> A speaker said to him [al-Hakim al-Tirmidhi]: What is the Seal of Prophethood?
>
> He replied: The proof of Allah over His creation, in realisation of His (Exalted is He) statement: "and give good news to those who believe that they have a 'foot of truth' with their Lord." (10:2) So Allah certified for him [i.e. the Prophet (peace be upon him)] true servitude. Thus when the Judge appears in His majesty and greatness, on that plane, and He says: "O My bondsmen! I created you only for [My] servitude! So give [Me] the servitude!" There will be no sense or movement left for anyone due to the terror of that position, except Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace). For by that foot [of truth] that he has, he proceeds ahead of all the ranks of prophets and messengers, because he was given true servitude to Allah (Exalted is He). So Allah will accept it [i.e. servitude] from him and elevate him to the Praised Platform (*al-maqam al-mahmud*) near the Stool (*kursi*). Thereupon, the veil over that seal will be removed, and light will encompass him, and the rays of that seal will shine over him; and from his heart to his tongue will spring praise that none from His creation heard; until all the prophets will know that Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace) was the most knowledgeable of them about Allah (Glorified and Majestic is He). Thus, he is the first converser and the first intercessor, so he will be given the Standard of Praise and Keys of Generosity. The Standard of Praise is for the bulk of the believers while the Keys of Generosity for the prophets. The Seal of Prophethood has a profound condition and station, more profound than you can bear, so I hope that this much is sufficient for you of its knowledge.
>
> So Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace) became an intercessor for prophets and saints and those besides them. Do you not see his (upon him peace) speech regarding the station of the Praised Platform: "Until Ibrahim the Friend of the Merciful will need me on that day"? That was narrated to me by Jarud from al-Nadr ibn Shumayl from Hisham al-Dastawa'i from Hammad who traced it to Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace). Do you not see that Allah (Blessed and Exalted is He) mentioned good news [to the believers] in many verses but did not mention it except with a condition: "and give good news to those who believe and do righteous works" (2:25) and he mentioned it here without a condition [i.e. without the condition of "righteous works"]: "and give good news to those who believe that they have a foot of truth with their Lord," informing them that the salvation of all on that day is through this true foot [i.e. the Prophet (peace be upon him)]?
>
> As for the proof, it is as though He says to the prophets (upon them peace): "O assembly of prophets! This is Muhammad. He came at the end of time, weak in body, weak in might, weak in livelihood, short in life. He produced what you have seen of true servitude and copious knowledge. And you in your speech and your lives and your bodies did not produce what he produced." Thereupon, the veil over the seal will be removed, and all talk will end, and it will become a proof over all creation; because the thing that is sealed is guarded. And thus is Allah's (Exalted is He) administration over us in this world: that when a thing is found with its seal, doubt is removed and argumentation ends amongst people.

So Allah gathered the particles of prophethood for Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace) and He perfected them for him and He sealed them with his seal. So neither his self (*nafs*) nor his enemy find a path to enter the place of [his] prophethood due to that seal. Do you not see the hadith of al-Hasan al-Basri (Allah have mercy on him) from Anas ibn Malik (Allah be pleased with him) in the hadith of intercession from Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said: "When they come to Adam they will ask him to intercede for them to their Lord, Adam will say to them: 'What is your opinion, if one of your goods were collected in his absence and then they were sealed [i.e. tied away], will the goods only be approached but from the route of the seal? So go to Muhammad for he is the Seal of the Prophets.'" Its meaning according to us is that prophethood in its entirety has culminated in Muhammad (Allah bless him and grant him peace); so his heart was made a vessel for the perfection of prophethood and then it was sealed.

...

Allah did not leave the proof concealed in the inside of his heart for He made it manifest; so between his shoulders was that seal manifest like the egg of a pigeon. And this is for him a great station the story of which is long.

Indeed the one who is blind to this information, he thinks that the interpretation of "the Seal of the Prophets" is [only] that he is the last of them in being sent. But what virtue is there in this? And what [perfection in] knowledge is there in this? This is the interpretation of ignorant people.

Most recite *khatam* (seal) with *fath* on the *ta'*. As for those from the Salaf who recited with *kasr* on the *ta'* [i.e. as *khatim*], its interpretation is that he is a *khatim* (sealer) in the sense of the active participle. That is, he sealed prophethood by the seal which he was given. Of that which confirms this is what was narrated in the hadith of the Ascension (*mi'raj*) from the hadith of Abu Ja'far al-Razi from al-Rabi' ibn Abi al-'Aliyah from what he mentioned regarding the meeting of the prophets in the Aqsa mosque: "So every prophet mentioned the favour of Allah upon him, and it was from the speech of Allah's Messenger (Allah bless him and grant him peace) that he said: 'He made me the sealer and the opener.' So Ibrahim (upon him peace) said: 'By this, Muhammad is superior to [all of] you.'"

(*Kitab Khatm al-Awliya'*, Edited by Othman I. Yahya, Imperial Catholique, Beirut, pp. 338-342)

Appendix C:
Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri's Explanation of the Controversy on *Imkan al-Kadhib*

In the treatise *al-Tasdiqat li Daf' al-Talbisat*, also known as *al-Muhannad 'ala al-Mufannad*, Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri answered three related questions on the issue of the possibility of lying in Allah's speech (Exalted is He) and Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi's position on the matter. Since these answers shed further light on the matter, a translation of these answers is reproduced here.

Question Twenty Three:

Did the eminent *shaykh*, the scholar of his time, Mawlawi Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, say that the Creator (Exalted is He) has actually lied, and that the one who says this has not erred, or is this amongst the slanders against him? Assuming the latter, how do you respond to what al-Barelwi mentioned that he has with him a photocopy of the deceased *shaykh*'s fatwa stating this?

Answer:

That which they attributed to the eminent and incomparable shaykh, the scholar of his time, the peerless of his age, Mawlana Rashid Ahmad Gangohi, that he said that the Creator (Exalted is His Eminence) actually lied and that the one who says this has not erred, it is a slander against him (Allah Most High have mercy on him) and is from the lies concocted by the deceptive and lying devils (Allah confound them! How they are perverted!). His respected person is innocent of such heresy and disbelief. The fatwa of the *shaykh* (his secret be sanctified) that was printed and published in volume one of his *Fatawa Rashidiyyah* (p. 119) falsifies their [claim]. It is in Arabic and was verified and stamped with the seals of the 'ulama of Makkah al-Mukarramah. A copy of this question [and answer] follows:

> In Allah's Name, the Ever Merciful, the Beneficent. We praise Him and send blessing on His noble Messenger. What is your view (may your blessings last) on Allah being described with the attribute of falsehood? And what is the ruling on the one who believes He lies? Provide us with an answer, and be rewarded.
>
> Answer:
>
> Allah (Exalted is He) is certainly free from having the attribute of falsehood, and no element of falsehood is found in His Speech, as Allah says, "Who is more truthful than Allah in speech?" (4:122) Whoever believes or professes that Allah lies, he is certainly an accursed disbeliever, and has opposed the Book, the Sunna and the consensus of the ummah.
>
> Yes, the belief of the people of faith is that which Allah foretold in the Qur'an, that Pharaoh, Haman and Abu Lahab are from the inhabitants of Hell, it is a decisive decision that He will not act contrary to, but Allah (Exalted is He) is Able to admit them into Paradise and is not incapable of this, but He will not do so by His choice.

Allah (Exalted is He!) said, "And if We had so willed, We could have given every soul its guidance, but the word from Me concerning evildoers took effect: that I will fill the Fire with the jinn and mankind together." (Qur'an 32:12) It is evident from this verse that had Allah wished, He would have made everybody believers but He does not contradict what He says, and this is all by choice, not coercion. He is a Doer by choice, acting as He wills.

This is the belief of all the 'ulama of this ummah, as al-Baydawi said under the explanation of His statement (Exalted is He), "If you forgive them…" (Qur'an 5:118) that "the absence of forgiveness for *shirk* is a consequence of His threat, but it is not intrinsically impossible." Allah knows best the truth.

The lowly Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (may he be pardoned) wrote this.

A review of the endorsements of the *'ulama* of Al-Makkah al-Mukarramah, Allah increase its honour:

"All praise to the One Who is deserving of it, and from Him extends all help and guidance. That which 'Allamah Rashid Ahmad said in reply as cited [above] is the truth from which there is no escape. Allah send blessings and peace on the Seal of the Prophets, his family and his companions."

The servant of the Shari'ah, seeking tender grace, Muhammad Salih ibn al-Marhum Siddiq Kamal al-Hanafi (Allah support them), the present Mufti of Makkah al-Mukarramah, ordered his signature.

The one hopeful of perfect attainment from His Lord, Muhammad Sa'id ibn Muhammad Babusayl at the Protected Makkah (Allah forgive him and his parents, and his teachers and all the Muslims) signed it.

Seeking pardon from the Giver of Bestowals, Muhammad 'Abid ibn al-Marhum Shaykh Husayn, Mufti of the Malikis at the protected land of Allah, [signed it].

"[After] sending blessings and peace, that which 'Allamah Rashid Ahmad gave in answer is sufficient and upon it is dependence, rather it is the truth from which there is no escape."

Written by the lowly one, Khulf ibn Ibrahim, a servant of *ifta* for Hanbalis, at the honoured [city of] Makkah.

The response to what al-Barelwi said that he has in his possession a copy of the fatwa of the deceased *shaykh* in photocopy form containing what he mentioned, it is from his inventions that he invented and kept with himself to slander the *shaykh* (Allah sanctify his secret). Such lies and slanders are insignificant for him, for he is the teacher of teachers in this and all of them [i.e. liars] are children in comparison to him in his time. Indeed he is a distorting manipulator and a scheming imposter, often forging signatures. He is not less than the Masih al-Qadiyani, since the latter claims messengership manifestly and openly, and the former conceals [claims of] revivalism, and anathematises (*yukaffiru*) the 'ulama of the ummah, just as the Wahhabis, the followers of Muhammad ibn

'Abd al-Wahhab, anathematise the ummah (Allah Most High disgrace him as He disgraces them).

Question Twenty Four:

Do you believe in the possibility of the occurrence of falsehood in a speech from the Speech of the Master (Great and Glorious is His Transcendence). If not, what then is your opinion?

Answer:

We and our elders (Allah Most High have mercy on them) declare and are convinced that all speech that issued from the Creator (Great and Glorious is He) or will issue from Him is absolutely truthful, and it is certain that it concurs with reality. Undoubtedly, there is no trace of falsehood in any part of His (Exalted is He) Speech, nor any doubt about [the absence of] contravening reality [in His Speech]. Whoever believes contrary to this or conceives of a lie in any part of His Speech, is a disbeliever, apostate and heretic, and does not have even a trace of faith.

Question Twenty Five:

Have you ascribed the view of "*imkan al-kadhib*" (the possibility of lying) to some of the Ash'aris? If so, what is meant by this? And do you have a proof-text for this view from the reliable scholars? Explain the matter to us as it is.

Answer:

This began as a dispute between us and the Indian logicians and innovators about the capacity of the Maker (Transcendent is He) to act contrary to what He promised, informed, intended, and so on. They said that acting contrary to these things is absent from Allah's Ancient Power (*qudrah qadimah*), hypothetically impossible (*mustahil aqlan*), impossible to exist within His capacity, and it is necessary for Him [to act] in accordance with His promise, report, intent and knowledge. We said: such things are certainly capacitated, but their occurrence (*wuqu'*) is not possible, according to the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah from the Ash'aris and Maturidis, textually and logically according to the Maturidis, and only textually according to the Ash'aris.

They objected that if the capacity of these things were possible, it would entail the possibility of falsehood and this is certainly not in His capacity and is intrinsically impossible (*mustahil dhatan*). We responded using a variety of answers from the theologians, of which was: even if the concomitance of the possibility of falsehood in acting contrary to the promise, reports and so on, in His capacity is accepted, it too is not intrinsically impossible, rather, like oppression and impudence, it is intrinsically capacitated, but it is textually and logically impossible, or just textually, as more than one of the Imams have espoused. When they saw these responses they caused corruption in the land and attributed to us [the position of] allowing imperfections (*naqs*) in relation to His Holiness (Blessed and Exalted is He), and they spread this accusation amongst the foolish and the ignorant to create enmity in the common people and to seek enjoyment and popularity amongst men. They reached the roads of the heavens in fabrication when they forged an image from themselves [expressing] the actuality (*fi'liyyah*) of falsehood without fearing the Knowing King. When Indians became aware of their scheming, they sought help from the noble 'ulama of the two Sanctuaries because they know they are unaware of their evils and the reality of the views of our 'ulama.

Their likeness is but the likeness of the Mu'tazilah as compared with the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, since they [i.e. the Mu'tazilah] excluded rewarding the sinner (*ithabat al-'asi*) and punishing the obedient (*'iqab al-muti'*) from the Ancient Power and made justice (*'adl*) necessary for Allah's essence. They called themselves "the advocates of justice and transcendence" and they attributed injustice, unconscientiousness and ugliness to the *'ulama* of Ahl al-Sunna wa al-Jama'ah. So, just as the predecessors of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah did not mind their ignorance and did not permit incapacity in relation to Him (Transcendent and Exalted is He!) in the aforementioned injustice, and broadened the Ancient Power while also removing imperfections from His Noble Absolute Self and perfecting the transcendence and sanctity of His Lofty Holiness, saying that, "Your understanding of the possibility of the capacity to punish the obedient and reward the sinner as an imperfection, is but the consequence of [following] the wretched philosophers"; in the same way, we say to them, "Your understanding of the ability to act contrary to the promise, report and truth and the likes of them, as an imperfection, although their issuance (*sudur*) from Him (Exalted is He) is impossible, only textually, or rationally and textually, is but the misfortune of philosophy and logic and your adverse ignorance."

They do what they do because of the absolute transcendence [of Allah], but they are unable to perfect the Power and broaden it. As for our predecessors, the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, they combined between the two matters, of widening the Power and perfecting transcendence for the Necessary (Transcendent and Exalted is He).

This is what we mentioned in *al-Barahin al-Qati'ah* in summary-form, and here are some of the proof-texts in support of it from the authoritative books of the school:

(1) It says in *Sharh al-Mawaqif*:

"All the Mu'tazilites and Kharijites make punishing the one who incurs a major sin necessary when he dies without repentance and they do not allow Allah to pardon him for two reasons:

"First, He (Exalted is He) made it a promise to punish major sins and informed [us] of this i.e. punishment because of it, so if He does not punish for a major sin and pardons, it would entail reneging on His threat and falsehood in His speech, which are impossible. The answer is, the conclusion of this [argument] is that punishment will [actually] occur, so where is the [intrinsic] necessity of punishment, on which is our discussion, since there is no doubt that non-necessity [of punishment] along with [its] occurrence does not entail reneging and falsehood? It cannot be said that it entails their possibility which is also impossible, because we say: its impossibility is prohibited. How so, when they are from the possibilities included in His (Exalted is He) Power?" End [quote from *Sharh al-Mawaqif*]

(2) In *Sharh al-Maqasid* by 'Allamah al-Taftazani (Allah Most High have mercy on him) at the end of the discussion on Power, [he says]:

"The deniers of the inclusiveness of His Power are many groups; of them are al-Nazzam and his [Mu'tazilite] followers who say that He does not have power over ignorance, falsehood and oppression and all ugly acts (*qaba'ih*), for if their creation were in His capacity, their issuance (*sudur*) from Him would be possible, and this concomitant (*lazim*) is false because it results in impudence (*safah*) if He knows the ugliness of this and its dispensability, and in ignorance if He is not knowing. The response is: we do not concede the ugliness of a thing in relation to Him, how [can we accept this] when He is in complete control of His kingdom?

And if it [i.e. ugliness in relation to Him] is conceded, Power over it does not negate the impossibility of its issuance from Him, by consideration of the presence of disposal and the absence of need, even if it is possible (*mumkinan*)." End [quote from *Sharh al-Maqasid*], in summary-form.

(3) It says in *al-Musayarah* and its commentary *Al-Musamarah* by 'Allamah al-Muhaqqiq Kamal ibn al-Humam al-Hanafi and his student Ibn Abi l-Sharif al-Maqdisi al-Shafi'i (Allah Most High have mercy on them), the text of which is: "Then he i.e. the author of *al-'Umdah* said, 'Allah (Exalted is He) is not described with Power over oppression, impudence and falsehood because the impossible is not included in [His] Power, i.e. it is improper for it to pertain to them. According to the Mu'tazilah, He (Exalted is He) is Able over all that but does not do [them].' End quote from *al-'Umdah*.

"It appears as though he altered that which he transmitted from the Mu'tazilah, since there is no doubt that the absence of power over what was mentioned, is the position of the Mu'tazilah. As for its presence, i.e. power over what was mentioned, and then abstention from pertaining to them by choice, to the school, i.e. it is to the school of the Ash'aris, more fitting than it is to the school of the Mu'tazilah. It is obvious that this more fitting [position] is also included in transcendence, since there is no doubt that abstention therefrom i.e. from those things mentioned, of oppression, impudence and falsehood, is from the matter of transcendence, from that which does not befit the majesty of His Holiness (Exalted is He).

"Hence, it should be understood by the foregone premise, i.e. the intellect understands, which of the two views are more excessive in transcendence from indecencies: is it power over it, i.e. what was mentioned from the three matters, along with impossibility, i.e. His abstention from it by choosing that abstention; or its impossibility from Him because of the absence of power over it? It is incumbent to rely on the more inclusive of the two statements in transcendence which is the statement more fitting to the school of the Ash'aris." End [quote from *al-Musamarah*].

(4) In *Hawashi al-Kalnabwi 'ala Sharh al-'Aqa'id al-Adudiyyah* by al-Muhaqqiq al-Dawwani (Allah Most High have mercy on them) [it is mentioned], the text of which is:

"In sum, lying being ugly in the uttered-speech (*al-kalam al-lafzi*), in the sense that it is an attribute of deficiency, is prohibited according to the Ash'aris. That is why al-Sharif al-Muhaqqiq (al-Jurjani) said it is from the totality of the possibilities (*mumkinat*), and acquiring decisive knowledge of its non-occurrence in His speech by consensus of the scholars and the Prophets (upon them be peace) does not negate its intrinsic possibility like all decisive knowledge of normal occurrences (*al-'ulum al-'adiya*) and it does not negate what Imam al-Razi said," to the end.

(5) In *Tahrir al-Usul* by the author of *Fath al-Qadir*, Imam Ibn al-Humam, and its commentary by Ibn Amir al-Hajj (Allah Most High have mercy on them) [they say], the text of which is:

"Therefore – i.e. since whatever is conceived as a deficiency is impossible for Him – the decisiveness of the impossibility of attributing Him – i.e. Allah (Exalted is He) – with lying and the like of it (Transcendent is He beyond that) becomes apparent. Also, if His act being attributed with ugliness was possible, confidence in the integrity of His promise, the integrity of His speech besides it – i.e.

[besides] His (Exalted is He) promise – and the integrity of His Prophets would disappear – i.e. in principle, His integrity would be uncertain.

"According to the Ash'aris, He (Exalted is He) is certainly not attributed with ugly acts, but they are not rationally impossible, like all of creation. [This is] just like all the sciences in which one of two opposites being the reality is certain, but the other is not impossible, if it were assumed that it is the reality; just like the certainty of Mecca and Baghdad – i.e. their existence – since their non-existence is not rationally impossible. Therefore – i.e. when the matter is such – confidence [in the integrity of His word] disappearing is not necessitated because the possibility of something rationally does not necessitate not having firm resolve of its non-existence.

"The running dispute regarding the rational impossibility and possibility of this applies to all deficiencies – is Allah's power over it absent or is it, i.e. the deficiency, contained in it, i.e. His Power? He will certainly not do it, i.e. the absolutely decisive condition is the deficiency will not be performed," to the end.

Similar [statements] to what we quoted from the school of the Ash'aris were mentioned by al-Qadi al-'Adud in *Sharh Mukhtasar al-Usul* and the commentators on it. Similar [statements] to it are found in *Sharh al-Mawaqif* and the marginalia to *al-Mawaqif* by al-Chalabi, and others. Similarly, 'Allamah al-Qushji in *Sharh al-Tajrid*, al-Qunawi and others stated this. We avoided quoting their texts fearing prolixity and tedium. Allah has charge of right guidance and direction.

(*Al-Muhannad 'ala l-Mufannad ya'ni 'Aqa'id 'Ulama Ahl al-Sunnah Deoband*, Mawlana Khalil Ahmad Saharanpuri, Idarat Islamiyyat, 1984, pp. 70-84)